Social Determinants of Health

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
Healthy People in Healthy Communities

Although many people develop at least one chronic health condition during their life, some people are more vulnerable—and it isn't their fault.

While lifestyle choices—like diet, physical activity, and sleep habits—affect your health, other considerations also play a part. These non-medical factors, called social determinants of health, are the conditions in which you are born, live, grow, learn, work, worship, and age.

It isn't always the wealthier who are healthier—but having a secure income and health insurance sure can help.

Take food access, for example. Do you live near a grocery store? Do you have reliable transportation to get there? Can you afford fresh, minimally processed foods? Do you have the time, equipment, and know-how to prepare them? Communities with the resources to be healthy have an advantage over communities that lack resources.

The Health Department looks for trends and root causes that affect health—and we support solutions that improve many people's health.

We advocate for policies that protect clean air and safe drinking water. We study the effects of suitable housing and walkable neighborhoods, where people feel safe enough to get outside. We work to ensure access to culturally and linguistically appropriate services and healthcare.

Can you think of things in your community that make it harder to achieve optimal health? We'd love to hear from you!

Learn more at tpchd.org/chronicillness

Disease Prevention & Management | September 2026
3629 S. D St. | Tacoma, WA 98418 | (253) 649-1413 | tpchd.org