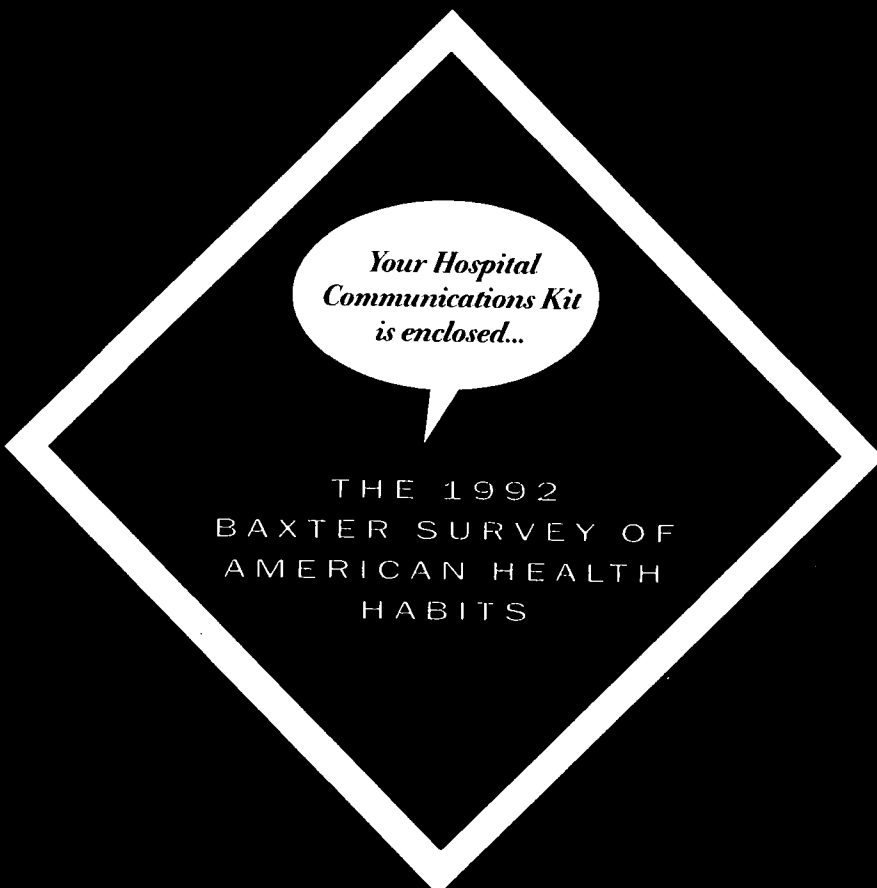




*Your Hospital
Communications Kit
is enclosed...*

THE 1992
BAXTER SURVEY OF
AMERICAN HEALTH
HABITS

Baxter

February 25, 1993

Dear Colleague:

Here is your kit of communications materials for the Baxter Survey of American Health Habits. I very much hope you find them helpful. The various items are designed to be put into use quickly and conveniently.

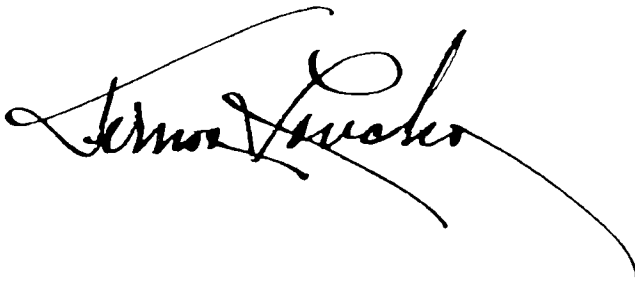
As you know, our nationwide release for the survey results is March 11. We will be holding a news conference in Washington on that day. We will give the survey findings to the national media at that time. Even more important, we're going to be able to report that about 1,600 hospitals nationwide are carrying the survey results to their own communities on that day.

The point, of course, is that we as a nation need to safeguard good health--and hospitals are helping in significant ways. I hope you agree that this is both an important and a newsworthy message.

Please don't release the data until March 11.

Again, thanks for your interest. Thanks also for your efforts in this very important part of health care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vernon Loucks", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

P.S. We'd enjoy hearing about your experiences with this program.

Suggestions for Using This Kit

The 1992 Baxter Survey of American Health Habits, a report card on the nation's health, provides an opportunity for your hospital to underscore its role as a community leader in health-education and health-promotion. Enclosed in this kit are several items -- a survey booklet, sample news release, letter-to-the-editor and newsletter article -- to help you send to your community a vital message about the importance of safeguarding our good health. Here are some suggestions on how to use these materials:

- **Survey Booklet.** Imprint your hospital logo on the front of the Baxter Survey of American Health Habits reproducible booklet and distribute copies to the media with the enclosed news release customized for your community. Consider distributing the booklet, provided here in a form for quick reproduction, to selected community leaders and groups via direct mail. Also consider adding your hospital's logo to selected camera-ready graphics in the booklet depicting survey highlights and submit with the sample news release to local media.
- **News Release.** Customize the news release to describe the programs your hospital has planned for the community and distribute it to local media. Identify a hospital executive, perhaps your chief of medical staff or chief executive officer, to serve as an expert spokesperson on good health habits and preventative health care.
- **Sample Letter-to-the-Editor.** Adapt the sample letter-to-the-editor for signature by your hospital's chief executive officer and send to local daily and/or suburban newspapers.
- **Sample Newsletter Article.** Run the sample newsletter article on the survey results in your community wellness newsletter and/or your employee newsletter. Highlight the programs your hospital is offering to promote good health habits.

Other Activities to Consider:

- **News Conference.** Hold a news conference in your community to announce the survey results, using spokesperson(s) from your hospital and other local hospitals and health organizations (if appropriate).
- **Interviews.** Work with local radio and television stations to arrange interviews with your designated hospital expert on preventative health care and highlight how your hospital is working to help the community "stay healthy."
- **Fact Sheets.** Create a series of fact sheets from the survey results, with each fact sheet focusing on an area of the survey, and forward these sheets to the media with a customized news release.
- **Topic-Specific News Releases.** Select one of the survey topics, such as smoking habits, and write a news release to spotlight your hospital's existing wellness program.

As you know, Baxter International is planning a national news conference on March 11 in Washington, D.C., to announce to the national media the results of the survey and how hospitals are working to help their communities. *To ensure the strongest results, it's very important that the survey results not be released in your community until this date.*

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**How
healthy are
we?**

*What are
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THE 1992 BAXTER SURVEY OF AMERICAN HEALTH HABITS

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**How
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THE 1992 BAXTER SURVEY OF AMERICAN HEALTH HABITS

**Sample
News
Release**



Contact: *(Hospital name, telephone number)*

**Americans' Health Habits Turn For Worse:
Weight Up; Nutrition, Exercise Down, Survey Says**

(Hospital name) Plans (health program descriptions)

(Hospital city, State), March 11, 1993 -- At a time when the nation can least afford it, Americans are slipping in several important health habits, according to a new nationwide survey released by *(Hospital name)*. And because the cost of preventing illness is much less than the cost of treating it, *(Hospital name)* is working in several ways to promote good health, including *(describe programs)*.

During 1992, Americans gained weight, ate less carefully than in 1991, and exercised no more than they did a decade ago, according to the 1992 Baxter Survey of American Health Habits, conducted by Louis Harris and Associates, who have been tracking health habits for 10 years. The new survey is sponsored by Baxter International, working in partnership with hospitals nationwide. Baxter is the world's leading marketer of health-care products, systems and services.

The most significant improvements made recently in health behavior across the nation are in areas such as seatbelt use and the use of smoke detectors, where good habits are required by law, the survey reports. When it comes to voluntary health habits, the nation is at best holding the line, and at worst slipping from gains made in the early- to mid-1980s.

"The survey is a worrisome sign that we're becoming careless about preventative health care," said *(Hospital executive)*. "This is disturbing because if we don't take steps to protect ourselves, we sacrifice what is probably our single best opportunity to contain health-care costs. That's why we are working to make sure this essential information about health behavior and risk reaches our community."

-more-

Among the programs (*Hospital name*) is offering to address these issues are (*describe programs planned for the community*).

"There's much that's good, but also much that needs fixing in our nation's health system," said Vernon R. Loucks Jr., chairman and chief executive officer of Baxter, headquartered in Deerfield, Ill. "But it all starts at home. We must not waste the good health that has been given to us in the first place."

More than 1,500 hospitals across the United States are working in various ways to carry these survey results today to their communities. Some are holding community meetings. Others have undertaken local media campaigns.

Bad News; Good News

The Baxter Survey examines behaviors in important areas of preventative health care. Among its findings: (*Select some or all statistics from the following which are most applicable to your community.*)

- **Exercise.** Only 33 percent of Americans now get strenuous exercise three times a week or more, down four percentage points from 1991.
- **Weight.** Sixty-six percent of Americans are overweight -- up from 63 percent in 1991, and 58 percent in 1983.
- **Eating Patterns.** Only 44 percent of Americans try hard to avoid cholesterol, and only 51 percent try hard to avoid fat. Both figures are down six percentage points from 1991. The proportion of Americans trying hard to eat enough fiber is down six points from 1983. The proportion trying hard to avoid too much sodium is down seven points from 1983.
- **Smoking.** Good news: Seventy-six percent of Americans are nonsmokers -- an all-time high.
- **Drinking.** Eighty-eight percent of Americans drink moderately or not at all; fully 40 percent say they never drink alcohol, an increase of six percentage points over 1983. Forty-eight percent say that on a day when they drink, they have no more than three drinks. That's down from 53 percent in 1983, and down slightly from last year.

-more-

Key findings (continued)

- **Drug Use.** Ninety-five percent of Americans say they never use illegal drugs. Only one percent say that at present they use illegal drugs frequently.
- **Stress.** Twenty-eight percent of Americans say they feel under great stress at least several days a week. And only 58 percent say they get seven to eight hours of sleep a night, down from 64 percent in 1983. Over the past decade, stress levels have risen constantly for those aged 18 to 49, and held steady for those 50 and over.
- **Seatbelt Use and Driving Habits.** Seatbelt use has risen dramatically. Seventy percent of Americans say they use seatbelts at all times when in the front seat of a car, up from 19 percent in 1983. Only 17 percent say they drive after drinking, down from 30 percent in 1983. But only 49 percent say they obey the speed limit all the time. This represents a seven-point drop from 1983.
- **Checkups.** Americans are eager to have their health evaluated in a professional setting. Eighty-four percent have at least annual blood pressure screenings. And although only 44 percent of Americans try hard to avoid cholesterol, 56 percent have their cholesterol level measured at least once a year.
- **Women's Health.** Women are conscientious about health screening. Eighty percent of women report having a Pap smear at least every other year, which is up from 75 percent in 1983. Forty-nine percent of women say they examine their breasts for signs of cancer at least once each month -- up 12 percent from 1983. But only 40 percent of women over 65 examine their breasts -- cause for concern, since the risk of breast cancer increases with age.

Forty-four percent of women overall have a mammogram at least every other year. For women aged 40 and over -- the group for which mammography is recommended -- roughly two-thirds report having the test at least every other year, which means one-third of all American women in the same age group are not being screened as often as they should be.

- **AIDS, Other Serious Illnesses.** Two-thirds of Americans say they are taking steps to avoid getting AIDS, although only one-fifth say they worry that they are personally at risk of getting it. Overall, Americans seem ready to take steps to reduce their risk of getting a serious disease even if they don't feel they're personally at risk. While fewer than one-third worry about hypertension and heart disease, over half take steps to avoid them.
- **Health Attitudes.** Americans want to change their health behavior. Seven of 10 smokers say they want to quit smoking. More than four in 10 Americans say they want to learn more about good nutrition, and the same number say they would like to lose weight. Over half of those who say they do not exercise regularly want to start.

Key findings (continued)

- **Motivation to Change.** Most of those surveyed (45 percent) say their strongest motivation to adopt healthier habits is "to be healthier while alive." One-third say that their strongest motivation is "to feel good about [themselves] today." Only one-fifth say their strongest motivation is "to live longer."

Fifty-seven percent of Americans think that those with unhealthy habits should pay more for their health insurance. Fifty-one percent think the same people should pay a greater share of their medical bills.

Sixty-six percent think higher insurance premiums would be at least somewhat effective in getting those with unhealthy habits to adopt better health habits. Thirty-three percent think higher premiums would be very effective.

Thirty percent of smokers say they would be very likely to quit, and 27 percent say they would be somewhat likely to quit, if they were required to pay significantly more for health insurance.

An overwhelming majority of Americans (more than 80 percent) think it is "very important" or "absolutely essential" that health insurance pay for preventative services for children, such as prenatal care, immunizations and boosters, and checkups; and for women's health screening, including Pap smears, breast exams and mammograms. Seventy-nine percent think that health insurance should pay for general physical examinations.

Physicians, Hospitals Seen As Resources

Overall, people who want to change their health habits say they are most interested in advice and counseling from their doctors, according to the survey. Hospitals are often a second choice, underscoring the key roles hospitals are playing in community health-promotion and education.

In terms of the kinds of programs most desired, the survey results suggest efforts that focus on the quality of life rather than on longevity. Other effective steps, according to the survey, might include health-care financing that gives people an incentive to change behavior through a combination of higher premiums for unhealthy habits and more generous reimbursement of preventative services; and legal sanctions and effective enforcement measures against dangerous behavior in cases where this is appropriate.

The 1992 Baxter Survey of American Health Habits was conducted during December 1992 by telephone interview with a total of 1,251 randomly selected adults. The survey includes a number of questions which Louis Harris and Associates has asked every year for the past 10 years (previously for *Prevention* magazine).

For more information about programs offered by (*Hospital name*) or for a copy of the survey, please call (*Hospital contact*) at (*telephone number*).

#

Sample Letter To The Editor



Dear Editor:

There's something that just about every single American can do about our national health-care problem. But a new survey shows that lots of us *aren't* doing it as well as we could and should.

What is it that we can do? It's to keep ourselves healthy in the first place -- eating right, sleeping right and living right. The people in Washington are worrying about our national health policy. But it's the people at home -- that means all of us -- who need to worry about our own good health.

This is serious business. A huge part of our nation's bill for health care (which will be more than \$900 *billion* this year) is directly related to unhealthy lifestyles. As we all know, these include smoking, poor diet, alcohol and drug abuse, even things like stress.

We also know that it costs much less to keep our good health than it does to restore it once it's lost. But Americans aren't doing a very good job in this area, according to the just-released Baxter Survey of American Health Habits. It shows, for example, that we're exercising less than last year, being less careful about nutrition -- and also feeling more stress in our day-to-day-lives.

(*Hospital name*) has just released detailed results of this survey in our community. We also have a range of programs designed to promote healthful living. (*Describe programs briefly.*)

In short, what we're trying to say at (*Hospital name*) is that good health care needs to start with all of us taking good care of our own health.

Sincerely,

(*Hospital CEO*)

Sample Newsletter Article



Americans' Weight Up; Nutrition, Exercise Down, Survey Says (Hospital name) Leads Health Campaign to Preserve Good Health

At a time when the nation can least afford it, Americans are slipping in several important health habits, according to a new nationwide survey released by (Hospital name). And because the cost of preventing illness is much less than the cost of treating it, (Hospital name) is taking the lead in educating (city) residents on positive health habits through (name planned programs).

During 1992, Americans gained weight, ate less carefully than in 1991, and exercised no more than they did a decade ago, according to the 1992 Baxter Survey of American Health Habits, conducted by Louis Harris and Associates, who have been tracking health habits for 10 years. The new survey is sponsored by Baxter International, working in partnership with hospitals nationwide. Baxter is the world's leading marketer of health-care products, systems and services.

According to the survey, the most significant improvements made recently in health behavior across the nation are in areas such as seatbelt use and the use of smoke detectors, where good habits are required by law. When it comes to voluntary health habits, the nation is at best holding the line, and at worst slipping from gains made in the early- to mid-1980s. Over the past 10 years, the biggest gain in health habits was made in 1984 and 1985. Improvements continued through the late '80s, but have been relatively flat since 1989 -- and are down from 1991.

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"The survey is a worrisome sign that we're becoming careless about preventative health care," said (*Hospital executive*). "This is disturbing because if we don't take steps to protect ourselves, we sacrifice what is probably our single best opportunity to contain health-care costs. That's why we are working to make sure this essential information about health behavior and risk reaches our community."

Bad News; Good News

To understand the status of our nation's health, it is important to examine the 1992 Baxter Survey results for behavior in important areas of preventative health care. Among the survey's findings: (*Select some or all statistics from the following which are most applicable to your community.*)

- **Exercise.** Only 33 percent of Americans now get strenuous exercise three times a week or more, down four percentage points from 1991.
- **Weight.** Sixty-six percent of Americans are overweight -- up from 63 percent in 1991, and 58 percent in 1983.
- **Eating Patterns and Nutrition.** Only 44 percent of Americans try hard to avoid cholesterol, and only 51 percent try hard to avoid fat. Both figures are down six percentage points from 1991. Particularly disturbing is that avoiding cholesterol is the only nutritional behavior that improved over the past decade -- until it fell six points from 1991 to 1992.
- **Smoking.** Good news: Seventy-six percent of Americans are nonsmokers -- an all-time high. Public-health experts point to extensive education campaigns, as well as the introduction of more restrictive laws on smoking in offices and public places. In addition, 30 percent of smokers say they would be very likely to quit, and 27 percent say they would be somewhat likely to quit, if they were required to pay significantly more for health insurance.
- **Stress.** Twenty-eight percent of Americans say they feel under great stress at least several days a week. And only 58 percent say they get seven to eight hours of sleep a night, down from 64 percent from 1983. Over the past decade, stress levels have risen constantly for those aged 18-49, and held steady for those 50 and over.

Key findings (continued)

- **Women's Health.** Women are conscientious about health screening. Forty-nine percent of women examine their breasts for signs of cancer once each month -- up 12 percent from 1983. But only 40 percent of women over 65 examine their breasts -- cause for concern, since the risk of breast cancer increases with age. Forty-four percent of women overall have a mammogram at least every other year. For women aged 40 and over -- the group for which mammography is recommended -- roughly two-thirds report having the test at least every other year, which means one-third of all American women in the same age group are not being screened as often as they should be.
- **Health Attitudes.** Americans want to change their health behavior. Seven of 10 smokers say they want to quit smoking. More than four in 10 Americans say they want to learn more about good nutrition, and the same number say they would like to lose weight. Half of those who say they do not exercise regularly want to start.
- **Motivation to Change.** Most of those surveyed (45 percent) say their strongest motivation to adopt healthier habits is "to be healthier while alive." One-third say that their strongest motivation is "to feel good about [themselves] today." Only one-fifth say their strongest motivation is "to live longer." Fifty-seven percent of Americans think that those with unhealthy habits should pay more for their health insurance.

To help (*city*) residents reverse these trends and improve their health -- as well as cut health-care costs -- (*Hospital name*) is offering a number of programs, including (*describe programs planned for the community*).

"The survey confirms that Americans want to change their health habits, but need to understand why and how to make these changes," said (*Hospital executive*). "We're committed to helping our community improve its health."

The 1992 Baxter Survey of American Health Habits was conducted during December 1992 by telephone interview with a total of 1,251 randomly selected adults. The survey includes a number of questions which Louis Harris and Associates has asked every year for the past 10 years (previously for *Prevention* magazine).

For more information about programs offered by (*Hospital name*) or for a copy of the survey, please call (*Hospital contact*) at (*telephone number*).