Regional Highlights

British Columbians’ health status varies from region to region. The following is a summary of regional performance, based on the provincial health goals. Regions are grouped from highest (best)-ranked to lowest on overall rating, with both strengths and weaknesses noted.

Highest-ranked four

North Shore
*Strengths*: Highest levels of education; lowest levels of poverty and unemployment  
*Weaknesses*: Higher than average rates of hepatitis B and intestinal illnesses

Richmond
*Strengths*: Highest life expectancy; best ranking in terms of disease and injury prevention  
*Weaknesses*: Higher than average rates of hepatitis B and tuberculosis

Capital
*Strengths*: High levels of education, employment, and income  
*Weaknesses*: Higher than average teen pregnancy rates; relatively high rates of hospitalization

Okanagan-Similkameen
*Strengths*: High life expectancy; relatively low rates of communicable diseases  
*Weaknesses*: Higher than average rates of youth smoking and confirmed cases of child abuse

Second-highest four

Simon Fraser
*Strengths*: High employment and economic levels; strong performance in child health indicators  
*Weaknesses*: Higher than average rates of tuberculosis, HIV and cancer and heart disease deaths

South Fraser Valley
*Strengths*: Low youth smoking rates; low rates of suicide, respiratory illness, and accidental injury  
*Weaknesses*: Higher than average rates of low birthweight babies

East Kootenay
*Strengths*: Low rates of crime, illicit drug deaths, and sexually transmitted diseases  
*Weaknesses*: Higher than average rates of waterborne illnesses, child abuse, and infant mortality

North Okanagan
*Strengths*: Lowest violent crime rate; low rates of teen smoking and communicable diseases  
*Weaknesses*: Relatively high rates of accidental deaths, especially for children and youth

Middle four

Coast Garibaldi
*Strengths*: High levels of employment and income; strong performance on health services indicators  
*Weaknesses*: Higher than average death rates from suicide, heart disease, and accidental injuries

Burnaby
*Strengths*: High life expectancy; high levels of education  
*Weaknesses*: High crime rates; high rates of illicit drug deaths and sexually transmitted diseases
West Kootenay-Boundary
*Strengths:* Low rates for spousal assault and serious property crimes
*Weaknesses:* Lower than average life expectancy; higher than average infant mortality rates

Peace Liard
*Strengths:* Low rates of poverty for non-seniors; highest rate of affordable housing
*Weaknesses:* High rates of smoking and deaths from lung cancer; high teen pregnancy rates

**Second-lowest four**

Fraser Valley
*Strengths:* Low infant mortality rates; good community follow-up for mental health patients
*Weaknesses:* Higher than average rates of low-income among single-parent families

Upper Island/Central Coast
*Strengths:* High immunization rates for communicable diseases; low rate of poverty for seniors
*Weaknesses:* High rates of youth unemployment, youth smoking, and illicit drug deaths

Vancouver
*Strengths:* High levels of post-secondary education; low rates of exposure to second-hand smoke
*Weaknesses:* High rates of crime, income inequity, and sexually transmitted diseases

Central Vancouver Island
*Strengths:* Highest level of community follow-up of patients admitted to hospital for mental illness
*Weaknesses:* High rates of income assistance, child poverty, and teen pregnancy

**Lowest-ranked four**

North West
*Strengths:* Relatively low rates of crime and communicable diseases; tied with Central Vancouver Island for highest level of influenza immunization for seniors
*Weaknesses:* High rates of unemployment, spousal assault, and child abuse

Thompson
*Strengths:* Highest participation rates for screening mammography; high levels of immunization
*Weaknesses:* High rates of suicide and deaths from accidental injuries

Northern Interior
*Strengths:* Lower rates of communicable disease; high rates of immunization
*Weaknesses:* Lowest life expectancy; high death rates from most causes

Cariboo
*Strengths:* Lower crime and communicable disease rates; relatively affordable housing
*Weaknesses:* High smoking rates; high death rates; low rates of post-secondary education

More information on regional health status is available in *Health Goals Regional Index 1999*, a companion report to the *Provincial Health Officer’s Annual Report 1999*. Copies are available from the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, (250) 952-0876 or on the Internet at www.hlth.gov.bc.ca/pho.
Health Goals Regional Index

Regional Ranking
- Highest (best) four
- Second highest four
- Middle four
- Second lowest four
- Lowest four

Source: Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors
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