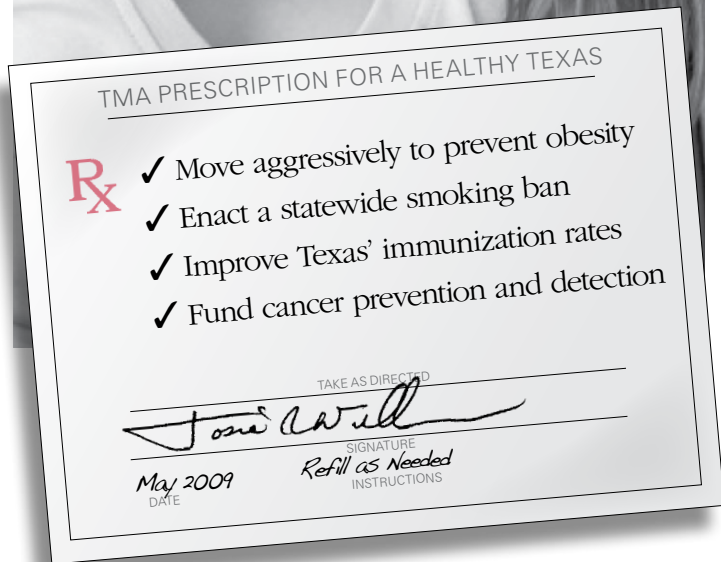


Improve Texans' Health



The Texas Medical Association's top three public health priorities are to reduce tobacco use, prevent obesity, and increase immunization rates. The association and its physician members support a legislative agenda that promotes preventive efforts to protect the health and well-being of Texans.



Physicians Caring for Texans

PATIENT AND PHYSICIAN PLATFORM

TMA Strongly Supports:

- **HB 5** by Rep. Myra Crowover (R-Denton) and **SB 544** by Sen. Rodney Ellis (D-Houston), which would prohibit smoking in all public places.
- **SB 282** by Sen. Jane Nelson (R-Lewisville) establishing grant programs to provide nutrition education to children, and to school districts for best practices in nutrition.
- **SB 1328** by Senator Nelson, which would direct the Department of State Health Services to study the feasibility of providing vaccinations to first responders.
- **HB 1310** by Rep. Burt Solomons (R-Carrollton) would restrict minors from using tanning facility devices.
- **SB 889** by Senator Nelson and **HB 1994** by Rep. Brian McCall (R-Plano), which would create a deduction under the current franchise tax for physicians who provide vaccines.
- **SB 895** by Senator Nelson and **HB 1358** by Rep. Jim Keffer (R-Eastland), relating to the structure of the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas.
- **HB 1310** by Rep. Burt Solomons (R-Carrollton), which would restrict minors from using tanning facility devices.

Medicine's Message: Tobacco

- The scientific evidence is now indisputable: Secondhand smoke is not a mere annoyance. It is a serious health hazard that can harm children and nonsmoking adults.
- If all U.S. workplaces implemented smoke-free policies, the reduction in heart attacks due to secondhand smoke would save the country \$49 million in direct medical expenses within the first year.
- Tobacco use is a major risk factor for many cancers, heart disease, stroke, and lung disease.

Medicine's Message: Obesity

- Obesity is responsible for 27 percent of the growth in health care spending. Treating obese patients costs 37 percent more than treating normal-weight patients.
- At least 50 percent of health care expenditures are lifestyle related and preventable. To stop the obesity epidemic, we must focus on preventing obesity rather than treating the diseases that result from it.
- An overweight child has a 70-percent chance of becoming overweight or obese as an adult.
- Research shows that increased fitness levels correlate positively with improved student academic performance and elevated test scores.

Medicine's Message: Immunizations

- Immunizations are important, effective, and safe. The health of the 400,000 Texas children born each year will improve when more children are immunized.
- A properly immunized community saves money. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, every dollar spent on immunization saves \$18.40 in direct medical and indirect costs, such as losses due to missed work, death, and disability.
- We must remain vigilant. Each year more than 42,000 adults and 300 children die in the United States from vaccine-preventable diseases and their complications.