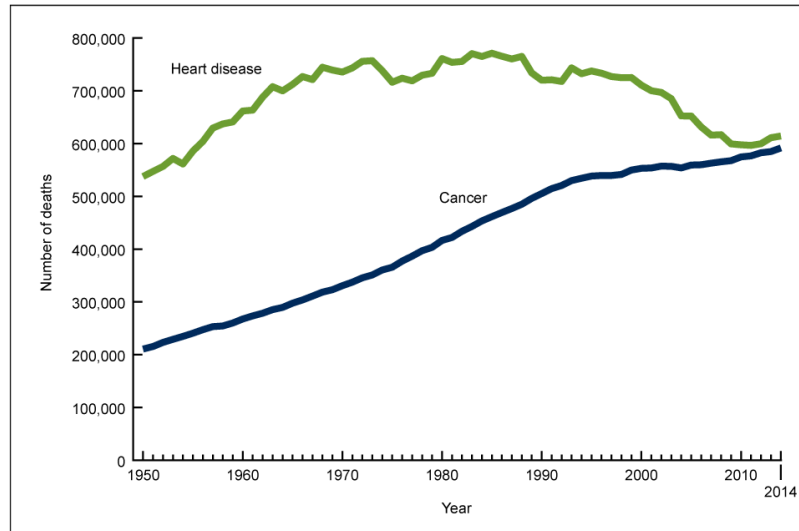


## 1.3: Major Health Concerns

### Leading Causes of Death in the United States

Do you know what the top two leading causes of death are for Americans? Heart disease takes the number one spot, followed by cancer. As you can see by the graph below, cancer death rates have been steadily increasing throughout the years. What does this potentially mean for the future? Is cancer going to take over as the number one leading cause of death? It certainly appears to be headed in that direction.

Figure 1. Number of deaths due to heart disease and cancer: United States, 1950–2014



NOTES: Leading cause is based on number of deaths. Access data table for Figure 1 at: [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db254\\_table.pdf#1](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db254_table.pdf#1).  
SOURCE: NCHS, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality.

#### The 10 Leading Causes of Death in the United States:

- Heart disease: 614,348
- Cancer: 591,699
- Chronic lower respiratory diseases: 147,101
- Accidents (unintentional injuries): 136,053
- Stroke (cerebrovascular diseases): 133,103
- Alzheimer's disease: 93,541
- Diabetes: 76,488
- Influenza and Pneumonia: 55,227
- Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis: 48,146
- Intentional self-harm (suicide): 42,773

### CDC Winnable Battles

To keep pace with emerging public health challenges and to address the leading causes of death and disability, CDC initiated an effort called Winnable Battles to achieve measurable impact quickly. Winnable Battles are public health priorities with large-scale impact on health and known effective strategies to address them. By identifying priority strategies, defining clear targets and working closely with our public health partners, we are making significant progress in reducing health disparities and the overall health burden from these diseases and conditions.

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