

Health benefits of cycling: Strategies to calculate potential cost savings

Researchers:

- Samuel Lankford, Professor, Department of Recreation Administration, Fresno State
- Fleming, K., Lankford, J., & Kooiman, W.

Abstract

Cycling provides a convenient and accessible mode of transportation that will help reduce health care expenditures and enhance the lives of individuals and communities. With participation in regular physical activity, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) may be prevented to help people live healthier lives. This study demonstrates strategies used to calculate the potential health cost savings at the state and city level assuming individuals meet physical activity requirements. The technical reports, "Economic and Health Benefits of Bicycling in Iowa," and "The Economic Impact of Parks & Recreation: Des Moines, IA 2013" demonstrates these strategies used to quantify the health impacts for cycling and physical activity based on prevalence and estimated costs for NCDs.

These strategies include the use of secondary data regarding participation in commuter cycling and physical activity along with health care costs in Iowa. The ability to quantify the economic impact related to potential health costs savings allows professionals to identify and articulate the benefits and need for improved physical activity levels within communities.