

# Healthcare workers: Do as we say, not as we do?

By ACSH Staff — December 20, 2012

When it comes to healthy living, healthcare workers may not always be the best role models for their patients, a [new study](#) <sup>[1]</sup> suggests.

The findings, published in *The Archives of Internal Medicine* this week, come from a series of phone surveys conducted by the CDC between 2008 and 2010. Over 260,000 people were surveyed over 21,000 of whom were healthcare workers. The latter group did not differ significantly in habits related to weight management, dental visits, getting sunburned and wearing a seatbelt, as compared to the non-healthcare workers. Co-authors Kenneth J. Mukamal and Dr. Benjamin Helfand didn't know whether the respondents were doctors, nurses, aides or otherwise employed.

The study also found that healthcare workers were more likely to have had a recent check-up and to report exercising in the past month, and were less apt to drink heavily..

The most surprising finding of the survey, the authors reported, was that women over the age of 50 in the health sector were 13 percent more likely to say that they hadn't been screened for breast cancer in the past two years, compared to non-health care workers. In total, 21 percent of women in the study hadn't had a recent mammogram.

Health care workers are role models for the general public, says ACSH s Dr. Gilbert Ross. They should not only match our expectations but exceed them. The fact that only 67 percent of health care workers get vaccinated for the flu can be added to this study s list of health care workers shortcomings as role models for their patients.

---

COPYRIGHT © 1978-2016 BY THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON SCIENCE AND HEALTH

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.acsh.org/news/2012/12/20/healthcare-workers-do-as-we-say-not-as-we-do>

**Links**

[1] <http://news.yahoo.com/health-care-workers-practice-preach-203011112.html>