When you think of health, what comes to mind? If it’s images of rice cakes, scales and grueling exercise, then it’s time to think again.

Healthy Carolina is expanding the definition of health, and it’s making it easy for the entire Carolina community to get with the program.

A university-wide initiative launched in 2006, Healthy Carolina seeks to create a campus environment that makes choosing a healthy lifestyle easy.

The initiative is concerned with all the dimensions of wellness -- physical, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, occupational and social -- and will offer opportunities for the Carolina community to improve in all these areas.

Healthy Carolina will achieve this goal by identifying the health needs of USC students, faculty and staff; guiding the development and promotion of new programs, services and policies that address those needs; and uncovering opportunities for collaborative, health-related research.

Through these and other activities, Healthy Carolina will make the USC campus an even better place to live, learn, work and play.
**THE TOPIC**

What does Healthy Carolina do?

**Assesses USC community’s health needs**

In spring 2006, Healthy Carolina identified students’ health needs through the National College Health Assessment, a survey that examines topics ranging from general and preventive health to the effects of health on academics.

Healthy Carolina has designed a similar survey for USC faculty and staff and will administer it this spring.

**Guides programs, services & policies**

Soon after the launch of Healthy Carolina, the university adopted Tobacco Free USC, a policy that prohibits the use of tobacco in and around university property. The new policy will protect non-smokers from secondhand smoke and help tobacco users -- less than 25% of students -- improve their health by making it easier for them to quit.

**Encourages collaborative research**

This spring, USC Facility Services staff will participate in a pilot study on worksite wellness. The 16-week program will measure the effects of making healthy lifestyle changes and will include exercise and weekly educational programs.

The study is a collaboration among Healthy Carolina, Campus Wellness Promotion, the College of Nursing, the Department of Exercise Science, Campus Recreation, the Arnold School of Public Health, the Counseling and Human Development Center and Thomson Student Health Center.

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**THE BUZZ**

“Once again the University of South Carolina is a pioneer in introducing a cutting-edge program that has tremendous potential to advance the quality of life for our students, faculty and staff.”

– Dr. Andrew Sorensen, USC president

“We would like to see Healthy Carolina be the initiative that keeps health on the tips of everyone’s tongues, the initiative that gets the campus focused on the health and well-being of our students, faculty and staff.”

– Dr. Michelle Burcin, Healthy Carolina director

“As an advocate for students, I am very excited about and supportive of the Healthy Carolina initiative. This program can and will help students find a healthier lifestyle...I am glad that our university is coming together to address the health concerns of our students, faculty and staff.”

– Tommy Preston, Student Government president

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**THE NUMBERS**

**General health**

Conditions experienced in past year, by percentage of students reporting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allergy problems</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back pain</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinus infection</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strep throat</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety disorder</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Health & academics**

Factors affecting performance, by percentage of students reporting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold/flu/sore throat</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep difficulties</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern for a troubled friend/family member</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship difficulty</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression/anxiety disorders</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**THE FACTS**

Healthy Carolina is based on two national health-promotion initiatives: Healthy People 2010, by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and the American College Health Association’s Healthy Campus 2010.

Healthy Carolina’s leading indicators of health are physical activity, weight and obesity, tobacco use, substance abuse, sexual behavior, mental health, injury and violence, environmental quality, immunization and access to health care.

Among USC students surveyed in 2006, **61.9%** described their health as very good or excellent.

Of students referred to the Early Intervention Initiative in Fall 2006, **39%** reported that health-related issues contributed to their excessive absences from classes.

Learn more about how Healthy Carolina is making healthy choices simple.

www.sc.edu/healthycarolina

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The University of South Carolina is an equal opportunity institution.