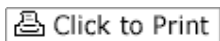




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Global warming, global health: Campaign to raise awareness

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By Doyle Rice, USA TODAY

From deadly heat waves in the Midwest and Northeast to more intense Gulf Coast hurricanes and Southwest droughts, the effects of climate change will have an unprecedented impact on the health of Americans, a report said Monday.

The connection between global warming and public health is the focus of a new campaign announced by the American Public Health Association. "There is a direct connection between climate change and the health of our nation," says the campaign's new blueprint designed to combat the health effects of climate change. "Yet few Americans are aware of the very real consequences of climate change on the health of our communities, our families and our children."

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In a telephone conference, report contributor Edward Maibach of George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., said, "Climate change is affecting our health now and will more in the future."


The effects of climate change on health are expected in all areas of the USA:

- Midwest and Northeast.** Major cities such as New York and Chicago could see temperatures that would mean more heat stress and heatstroke. The poor and the elderly would be hit especially hard.
- Northwest.** Heavy rainfall may lead to flooding and overflow of sewage systems, causing an increase in the spread of disease.
- Southwest.** Higher temperatures and decreased rain are likely to strain already limited water sources, increasing the likelihood of wildfires and air pollution.
- Great Plains.** Increased temperatures could mean scorching summers and more mild winters — which would significantly hurt food production.
- Southeast Atlantic and Gulf Coast.** Hurricanes and other weather events are expected to last longer and be more intense. That would mean bigger storm surges, more damage to buildings and roads, and contaminated food and water.

"These are all problems we have today, but they will intensify with climate change," said blueprint lead author Jonathan Patz of the University of Wisconsin.

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http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2008-03-31-global-warming-health_N.htm

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