

Riding a bike is not only fun, it is one of the healthiest ways to get around.

Today, adults and children alike struggle to overcome a sedentary lifestyle.

- 67% of American adults are overweight or obese• 17% of children aged 6 to 11 – and 19% of all teenagers -- are overweight
- Obesity contributes to more than 300,000 deaths per year, making it the 2nd highest risk factor for Americans (tobacco is the first)
- Because obesity decreases life expectancy by several years, the current generation may, for the first time in history, not live as long as their parents.
- Inactivity also has national economic impacts: the annual medical costs of physical inactivity accounts to a whopping \$76 billion -- almost 10% of all medical expenses.
- More than half of all Americans don't get the 30 minutes/day of moderate activity recommended by The Centers for Disease Control for a healthy lifestyle.

Bicycling can help address this growing problem.

- About half of all trips taken in the US are three miles or less; almost a quarter are one mile or less.
- Commuting 2 or 3 miles by bike takes only 15 minutes and the round trip satisfies the CDC recommendations for daily physical activity.
- A multi-year study of bicycle commuters in Denmark concluded that people who spent an average of 3 hours cycling to work each week decreased the risk of mortality by 40% over a sedentary control group. This study also found that the physical activity benefited older people more than young people.

But Americans need safe and convenient bicycle routes to work, school, shops, and recreation. Cities from Portland, Oregon to those in Europe and Australia are finding that investments in bicycle infrastructure not only increase bicycle ridership but create a safer environment for all road users. When the City of Portland expanded its bicycle network significantly from 1991 to 2006, it saw a four-fold increase in bicycle trips – yet the bicycle crash rate has actually decreased. Clearly, investments in safe and convenient bicycle facilities create a healthier environment for everyone.