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**PUTNAM COUNTY RANKS NUMBER ONE IN NEW
YORK STATE FOR HEALTH OUTCOMES**

Putnam County ranked number one in New York State for having the best overall health outcome rating according to the *2011 County Health Rankings for New York State* conducted by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. This composite score was based on many health-related factors. For example, Putnam is fifth lowest in premature deaths and ninth lowest in poor health-related quality of life factors.

The rankings compare multiple factors that influence health and allow residents to see both where their county is doing well and where they need to improve. The report highlights the effects of where we live, learn, work and play on how healthy we are and how long we live.

"Although ranking systems are only blunt measures of health, this study confirms that Putnam is a healthy place to live and most of our people enjoy better health, overall, than some other parts of New York," said Sherlita Amler, MD, Commissioner of Health. But like every other community, there is always room for improvement," she said.

Besides statistics on death and illness, the study also looked at health-related behaviors, such as tobacco and alcohol use, obesity, motor vehicle deaths, and rates of teen births and sexually-transmitted diseases. Putnam County was highly ranked (4th of 62) for physical environment including access to healthy foods and recreational facilities. The Health Department continues to emphasize chronic disease prevention with the *Live Healthy Putnam* initiative which focuses on nutrition and physical activity.

Other issues that were looked at were: access to quality health care, levels of education, employment, household income, social support, public safety, and environmental quality. Despite the high ranking in health outcomes, the report indicates that Putnam is less highly ranked in access to quality health care. Putnam County ranked 33rd of 62 counties; an improvement from the 2010 ranking of 44th.

"The Putnam County Department of Health continues to work with community organizations to improve access to quality health care and to improve overall quality of life of Putnam residents. We are pleased the county has bike trails, beautiful parks and lakes, and outdoor fitness equipment that all help residents stay active. When illness occurs, we have an excellent hospital, great doctors, and a growing community effort to ensure care for those without adequate insurance," Commissioner Amler said.

For more information about the specific measures and Putnam County rankings visit

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/new-york/putnam>.

For more information about the *Live Healthy Putnam* initiative, please visit

<http://www.putnamcountynv.com/livehealthyputnam/index.htm>.

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