

VERMONT

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CDC: Burlington is healthiest city

City ranks best in exercise; Huntington, W. Va., scores worst

Staff and wire reports

What's the healthiest city in America?

How about a couple of hints? It's Vermont's largest city. It rhymes with Burlington.

You guessed it! It's Burlington, our Burlington.

The Queen City is tops among U.S. metropolitan areas by having the largest proportion of people — 92 percent — who say they are in good or great health.

It's also among the best in exercise and among the lowest in obesity, diabetes and

other measures of ill health, according to a recent report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Burlington's alter ego is Huntington, W.Va. — the unhealthiest city in America is in some ways quite similar to Burlington. Both are out-of-the-way college towns (Marshall University calls Huntington home) with populations that are overwhelmingly white people of English, German or Irish ancestry.

But there the similarities end:

■ Burlington is younger, with an average age of 37,

compared to 40 in Huntington, according to the Census Bureau.

■ Burlington is better off financially, with 8 percent living at the federal poverty level, compared to 19 percent in Huntington.

■ Burlington's much more educated, with nearly 40 percent of area residents having at least a college bachelor's degree. Only 15 percent in the Huntington area do.

The numbers came from the CDC report, released in August and based on survey data from 2006, comparing about 150 metropolitan areas.



TOBY TALBOT, Associated Press file

Katie Klingerman walks her dogs, Casey (left) and Luna, along the waterfront in Burlington in April.