

Today's "Health Beat"

Many newspapers have a health beat or a health section. What kinds of health topics do newspapers cover? How does your local newspaper compare with newspapers in other locations? In this activity, you will examine the health coverage in various newspapers and consider the impact that increased coverage of health topics may have on a community or state or on the nation as a whole.

- **Name of newspaper:**
- **Date:**
- **Title of health article:**
- **Type of article:** (preventive health, nutrition, fitness, disease outbreaks, federal or state legislative health issues, and so on)
- **Length of article:**
- **Intended audience:** (youths, seniors, males/females, registered voters, legislators or government officials, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, other minority groups, and so on)
- **Brief summary:**

ACTIVITY

Choose a specific newspaper, and look through it for health articles or the health section. Examine articles in two different editions of the newspaper you've selected, recording information about each article in a chart like the one above. Compare the information you have collected with others. In a class discussion, consider the following questions: How does the health coverage in the newspaper you examined compare with that in other papers? Do the papers cover the same kinds of

topics? Do they devote similar amounts of space to health topics?

EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS

Use the questions as a starting point for a one-page opinion paper: Why do you think media coverage of health topics has increased in recent years? What impact might increased coverage of health topics have on your community or state or on the nation as a whole?