U.S. life expectancy falls, as many kinds of death increase

By MIKE STOBBE
AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK — A decades-long trend of rising life expectancy in the U.S. could be ending: It declined last year and it is no better than it was four years ago.

In most of the years since World War II, life expectancy in the U.S. has inched up, thanks to medical advances, public health campaigns and better nutrition and education.

But last year it slipped, an exceedingly rare event in a year that did not include a major disease outbreak. Other one-year declines occurred in 1993, when the nation was in the throes of the AIDS epidemic, and 1980, the result of an especially nasty flu season.

In 2015, rates for 8 of the 10 leading causes of death rose. Even more troubling to health experts: the U.S. seems to be settling into a trend of no improvement at all.

Katy Kildee/The Saginaw News - MLive.com via AP

This Jan. 25 photo shows a room inside a funeral home in Saginaw, Mich. According to a study by the government released on Thursday, life expectancy in the U.S. has fallen for the first time in more than 20 years.

"With four years, you're starting to see some indication of something a little more ominous," said S. Jay Olshansky, a University of Illinois-Chicago public health researcher.

An American born in 2015 is expected to live 78 years and 9½ months, on average, according to preliminary data released Thursday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. An American born in 2014 could expect to live about month longer, and even an American born in 2012 would have been expected to live slightly longer. In 1950, life expectancy was just over 68 years.

The United States ranks below dozens of other high-income countries in life expectancy, according to the World Bank. It is highest in Japan, at nearly 84 years.

The CDC report is based mainly on 2015 death certificates. There were more than 2.7 million deaths, or about 86,000 more than the previous year. The increase in raw numbers partly reflects the nation's growing and aging population.

It was led by an unusual upturn in the death rate from the nation's leading killer, heart disease. Death rates also increased for chronic lower lung disease, accidental injuries, stroke, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, kidney disease and suicide.

The only clear drop was in cancer, the nation's No. 2 killer.

Experts aren't sure what's behind the stall. Some, like Olshansky, suspect obesity, an underlying factor in some of the largest causes of death, particularly heart disease.

But there's also the impact of rising drug overdoses and suicides, he noted. Drug overdose deaths soared 11 percent to more than 52,000 last year, the most ever, driven by increases in deaths from heroin, prescription painkillers and other so-called opioids.

"There are a lot of things happening at the same time," he said.

Some years the CDC later revises its life expectancy estimate after doing additional analysis, including for its 2014 estimate.

Average life expectancy declined for men, falling by more than two months, to 76 years and 3 ½ months in 2015. It fell by about one month for women, to 81 years and 2 ½ months, the CDC said.

Death rates increased for black men, white men, white women, and slightly for Hispanic men and women. But they did not change for black women.

The new CDC report did not offer a geographic breakdown of 2015 deaths, or analysis of death based on education or income. But other research has shown death rates are rising sharply for poorer people — particularly white people — in rural areas but not wealthier and more highly educated and people on the coasts.

"The troubling trends are most pronounced for the people who are the most disadvantaged," said Jennifer Karas Montez, a Syracuse University researcher who studies adult death patterns.

PARENTS TALK BACK

'Winning' the empathy game

AISHA SULTAN
Parents Talk Back

When I coerced my family into playing a new card game designed to nurture our empathy, the first question was: How do you win?

"Oh my God, it's not that kind of game," I said.

We're a competitive bunch. Let's just say I've been uninvited from some family game nights due to unsportsmanlike behavior involving a Taboo buzzer. Also, there may have been loud allegations of cheating leveled against certain children based on flimsy circumstantial evidence.

Never mind that. This PeaceMakers game, developed by Suzanne Tucker, a St. Louis mom and parent educator, was bound to increase our compassion and peacefulness toward one another. Who couldn't use a little more of that in their families, especially this time of year?

I was a little skeptical when the game arrived. It's a colorful deck of 42 cards, with a cute animal illustration and a mantra printed on each one. Granted, the target age group for the game is 3 to 9 years old. I was going to try this exercise with a 14-year-old girl who believes in her heart that she is unspeakably cooler than anyone in her family, and an 11-year-old boy who would rather be playing baseball or video games than indulging my empathy-building projects. Oh, and a spouse who likes to win family game nights nearly as much as I do.

The cutesy deck seemed stacked against us.

There are no specific rules, according to Tucker. Everyone takes a turn drawing a card, reading it aloud and then saying something about what they've read. You can relate it to an experience you've had recently, a thought or desire, or even sing, dance or draw in response.

It's less a game, and more a reflection time.

My son drew a card that said, "I stick with things and get things done." He mentioned a school assignment that had taken some time, and we agreed this card described him well.

I drew a card that said, "I am a leader." I added: "Yes, I am a leader in trying to get this family to do things even though no one really listens to me." That probably wasn't in the "positive affirmation" spirit, but Tucker had told me there was no "wrong" way to play.

The girl drew a card that said, "My mistakes help me learn and grow." She said she had nothing to say about that. In fact, she could not think of a single thing to offer in response.

"Just say something," I said, through gritted teeth.

"Fine! You don't have to get so mad!" she responded. She conceded that she may have made some mistakes before, though obviously not as many as the rest of us.

It was my husband's turn, and his card said to sing a song, an instruction he wholeheartedly embraced as he began to serenade us. My son and I cracked up laughing, and my daughter bolted.

"Oh my God, I'm outta here," she said on her way out.

We played a few more rounds, and I have to admit that it was fun and sweet to have a few minutes to say positive things out loud to one another.

Tucker says families can take five minutes to pull a card at breakfast before kids head to school, or perhaps at bedtime to create a moment of calm and sharing. It's a mindful way to bring focus and set an intention.

She launched her idea for PeaceMakers via Kickstarter in March and doubled her fundraising goal within three weeks, raising $7,000. She's shipped boxes all over the world, to more than 20 countries, and is working to get the game into various school districts. Her goal is to help children learn to self-regulate their emotions, and ultimately to see an end to shame, blame and pain in children.

Helping children (and adults) learn to identify their emotions is a critical part of that process.

"Name it to tame it," she said. "Feel it to heal it."

Studies shows that emotionally intelligent people are more successful in life, and high EQ can be more valuable than raw intelligence and experience. Decades of research suggests emotional intelligence is a critical factor that distinguishes successful leaders and star performers in the workplace.

Beyond the skill-building aspect of this game, I enjoyed the experience of just joking around with and listening to the people I cherish.

My husband agreed, although he added, "If that game had a winner, I would have totally won."

Embodying the spirit of the game, I'm willing to say, sure, honey.

You totally won.

■

Aisha Sultan is a St. Louis-based journalist who studies parenting in the digital age while trying to keep up with her tech-savvy children. Find her on Twitter: @AishaS.

Friday Morning — December 9, 2016

	STATION		6 AM	6:30	7 AM	7:30	8 AM	8:30	9 AM	9:30	10 AM	10:30	11 AM	11:30
FOX	(11)KFFX	11	AgDay	Hot/ Cleve.	Good Day Spokane				Paid	Dog Town	Steve Harvey (N)		Crime Watch Daily	
FOX	KPTV	3	Good Day Oregon at 6		Good Day Oregon				Good Day		The 700 Club		Rachael Ray (N)	
CBS	(19)KEPR	2	News	News	CBS This Morning (N)				Harry		The Price Is Right		Young & Restless	
CBS	KOIN	19	KOIN 6 News at 6 a.m.		CBS This Morning (N)				Let's Make a Deal		The Price Is Right		Young & Restless	
NBC	(25)KNDU	6	Wake Up Northwest		Today Show Dwayne Johnson, Mike Tirico				Today Show II (N)		Today Show III (N)		Million?	Million?
NBC	KGW	8	KGW News at Sunrise		Today Show Dwayne Johnson, Mike Tirico				Today Show II (N)		Today Show III (N)		Portland Today	
ABC	(42)KVEW	4	Northwest	Northwest	Good Morning America (N)				Live! With Kelly (N)		The View		Paid	Middle
ABC	KATU	5	KATU News Morning		Good Morning America (N)				AM Northwest		The View		Live! With Kelly (N)	
PBS	(31)KTNW		Stretch	W.L.Yoga	SplashB.	Jet Go!	Nature Cat	Peg + Cat	D.Tiger	Thomas	Sesame St.	DinoTrain	SplashB.	Sit and Fit
PBS	(59)OPB	13	Stretch	Jet Go!	Nature Cat	C.George	D.Tiger	D.Tiger	SplashB.	Sesame St.	DinoTrain	Peg + Cat	SuperW!	Thomas

AFTERNOON

	STATION		12 PM	12:30	1 PM	1:30	2 PM	2:30	3 PM	3:30	4 PM	4:30	5 PM	5:30
FOX	(11)KFFX	11	Paid	Pat. Court	Divorce	Divorce	Judge Mathis		The People's Court		2½Men	Mike&M.	Last Man	Last Man
FOX	KPTV	3	12 O'Clock News		E. Stanton	Teen News	OutSpace	Y. Icons	Am Athlete	Missing	Judge Judy	Judge Judy	5 O'Clock News	
CBS	(19)KEPR	2	NameG.	Bold & B.	The Talk (N)		Let's Make a Deal		Dr. Phil (N)		Judge Judy	Judge Judy	News	News
CBS	KOIN	19	News	Bold & B.	The Talk (N)		The Doctors (N)		Dr. Phil (N)		KOIN 6 News at 4 p.m.		News	News
NBC	(25)KNDU	6	TMZ	Paid	Days of Our Lives		Hot Bench	Hot Bench	Wendy Williams		Ellen DeGeneres (N)		News	NBC News
NBC	KGW	8	KGW New	Paid	Days of Our Lives		T.D. Jakes (N)		Ellen DeGeneres (N)		KGW News		KGW News	NBC News
ABC	(42)KVEW	4	The Chew		General Hospital		The Doctors (N)		Rachael Ray (N)		Minute	Minute	News	News
ABC	KATU	5	The Chew		General Hospital		Harry		Afternoon Live		KATU News @ 4		News	News
PBS	(31)KTNW		Charlie Rose		Ming (N)	Quilt Day	Stretch	C.George	Speaks	WordGirl	Arthur	Odd Squad	Wild Kratts	Business
PBS	(59)OPB	13	Paint This	Mexican	Charlie Rose (N)		Nature Cat	Bob Build	Cat/ Hat	Jet Go!	Speaks	WordGirl	Odd Squad	Wild Kratts

EVENING

	STATION		6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
FOX	(11) KFFX	11	Modern "A Fair to Remember"	Modern Family "ClosetCon '13"	2 Broke Girls "And the Extra Work"	Seahawks All Access	Kitchen The remaining contestants prepare for their next challenge a blind taste test. (N)		Exorcist On the eve of Pope Sebastian's visit, Marcus races to avert a potential tragedy. (N)		FOX News First at Ten	:35 Law & O: CI A Park Avenue dentist's murder turns out to be connected to the death of a patient.		:35 Anger Management
FOX	KPTV	3	6 O'Clock News		Family Feud	Family Feud	Hell's Kitchen "Spoon Fed" (N)		The Exorcist "Chapter Nine: 162" (N)		10 O'Clock News		11 O'Clock News	2 Broke Girls
CBS	(19) KEPR	2	Action News at 6 p.m.	Inside Edition	The Big Bang Theory	The Simpsons "YOLO"	MacGyver With just pliers & speaker wire Mac must rescue a kidnapped young genius prodigy.		Hawaii 5-0 Five-0 investigates a 10-year-old case of a missing teen & Danny's sister comes to Oahu.		BlueB. Frank and his most outspoken critic must work together too get justice for his son.		Action News at 11:00 p.m.	:35 Stephen Colbert
CBS	KOIN	19	KOIN 6 News at 6	Evening News	Extra	Ent. Tonight	MacGyver "Pliers" (N)		Hawaii Five-0 "Ka Luhi" (N)		Blue Bloods "Unbearable Loss" (N)		KOIN 6 News/ 11	:35 S. Colbert
NBC	(25) KNDU	6	Local News	Family Feud	Wheel of Fortune	Jeopardy!	Camera Nick Cannon has the stories behind some of the most surprising videos on the net.		Dateline NBC The news magazine presents investigative features and breaking news coverage.				Local News	:35 The Tonight Show
NBC	KGW	8	KGW News at 6:00 p.m.		Live at 7	Inside Edition	Caught on Camera "Surprise" (N)		Dateline NBC The news magazine presents investigative features & breaking news coverage.				KGW News at 11	:35 Tonight
ABC	(42) KVEW	4	Extra	Local News at 6:30	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Last Man St. "Help Wanted" (N)	Dr. Ken "Ken's Apology" (N)	Shark T. A mom who works with Santa Claus to ensure he personally replies to the letters he gets.		20/20 A combination of interviews, feature stories and hard-hitting investigative reports.		News /:05 Kimmel This distinctive late-night talk show features celebrity guests, bands & comedy.	
ABC	KATU	5	KATU News at 6		Jeopardy!	Wheel of Fortune	Last Man St. (N)	Dr. Ken (N)	Shark Tank (N)		20/20		KATU News	:35 Jimmy Kimmel
PBS	(31) KTNW		PBS NewsHour		BBC World News	Natural Health	Washington Week (N)	Charlie Rose (N)	First You Dream: The		Hitmakers		Charlie Rose (N)	
PBS	(59) OPB	13	Travelscope	Business (N)	PBS NewsHour		Washington Week (N)	To Be Announced						
	STATION	PEN	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
CABLE	A&E	52	The First 48 "Brother's Bread/ Into the Woods"		The First 48 "Cold Betrayal"		The First 48 "Senior Year"		Live PD (N)				First 48 "Run and Gun/ Lonesome Highway"	
CABLE	AMC	60	Dead "Too Far Gone"	:45 The Walking Dead "After"		:45 The Walking Dead "Inmates"		:45 The Walking Dead "Claimed"		:45 The Walking Dead "Still"		:45 The Walking Dead "Alone"		:45 Dead
CABLE	ANPL	24	Tanked!		Tanked!		Tanked!		Tanked!		Tanks tor the Help (N)		Tanked! "Shark Buffet"	
CABLE	CMT	43	Sherlock Holmes		Broken Skull Challen		★★★ Sherlock Holmes ('09, Adv) Jude Law, Robert Downey Jr..						Roseanne	Roseanne
CABLE	CNBC	72	Under Boss "Orkin"		Boss "Buffets, Inc."		Boss "True Value"		Undercover Boss		Undercover Boss		Paid	Paid
CABLE	CNN	68	CNN Tonight		CNN Superhero (N)		The Legacy of Barack Obama				CNN Superhero		Legacy of Obama	
CABLE	DISC	51	Gold Rush		Rush "Watery Grave"		Gold Rush: Pay Dirt (N)		Rush "Record Gold" (N)		Treasure Quest (N)		Rush "Record Gold"	
CABLE	DISN	26	★★★★ Aladdin Robin Williams.			Elena (N)	Lights (N)	Mickey (N)	Cali Style	Girl World	Underc.	Bizaard.	Lights	Mickey
CABLE	ESPN	33	NBA Basketball Houston Rockets at Oklahoma City Thunder (L)			NBA Basketball Phoenix Suns at Los Angeles Lakers Site: Staples Center -- Los Angeles, Calif. (L)					SportsCenter		SportsCenter	
CABLE	ESPN2	34	NCAA Football		SportsCenter		SportsCenter		SportsCenter		J & J (N)	30 for 30 "The U"		
CABLE	FNC	66	The Kelly File		Hannity		The O'Reilly Factor		The Kelly File		Hannity		On the Record	
CABLE	FOOD	61	Diners	Diners	Diners, Drive-Ins		Diners, Drive-Ins		Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners
CABLE	FREE	32	The Search for Santa Paws			:45 Santa Paws 2: The Santa Pups				:50 ★★ Snow Buddies ('08, Fam) James Belushi.				
CABLE	FX	65	The Equalizer ('14, Act) Denzel Washington.				★★★ Thor: The Dark World ('13, Act) Natalie Portman.						Thor: The Dark W...	
CABLE	GOLF	88	PGA Golf	PGA Golf Franklin Templeton Shootout				EPGA Golf Hong Kong Open Site: Hong Kong Golf Club -- Fanling, Hong Kong (L)						
CABLE	GSN	76	Feud (N)	Feud (N)	Fam. Feud	Fam. Feud	Window "Sugar Rush"		Fam. Feud	Fam. Feud	Tactics	Tactics	MindMan	MindMan
CABLE	HALL	87	Christmas List ('16, Rom) Alicia Witt.				Christmas in Homestead Taylor Cole.				A Heavenly Christmas Kristin Davis.			
CABLE	HGTV	62	Bargain	Bargain	Bargain	Bargain	Renovation		Renovation		H.Hunt (N)	House (N)	H.Hunt	House
CABLE	HIST	50	Ancient Aliens "The Satan Conspiracy"		Ancient Aliens "The NASA Connection"		Ancient Aliens "The Anunnaki Connection"		Ancient Aliens "The Vanishings"		Ancient Aliens "Beyond Roswell"		:05 Ancient Aliens "The Power of Three"	
CABLE	LIFE	29	★★ Under the Mistletoe Michael Shanks.				★★★ Crazy for Christmas Andrea Roth.				All I Want for Christmas Melissa Sagemiller.			
CABLE	NICK	27	Sponge	LoudHou.	Albert: The Little ...		Harvey	Sponge	Full House	Full House	Full House	Full House	Friends 1/2	Friends 2/2
CABLE	ROOT	37	Bull Riding Championship		UEFA Europa League Highlights (N)		UEFA Mag. (N)	ProFootball Week (N)	Seahawks Press Pass	Seahawks All Access	Fight "Texas Women's Championship"		Fight Sports MMA	
CABLE	SPIKE	42	★★★ Gladiator ('00, Epic) Joaquin Phoenix, Russell Crowe.			★★ Now You See Me ('13, Cri) Jesse Eisenberg. A team of illusionists pull off bank heists during their performances.					Gladiator A Roman general becomes a gladiator when the Emperor dies & his son usurps the throne.			
CABLE	SYFY	67	Resident Evil: Aft...		★★★ Maleficent ('14, Adv) Angelina Jolie.				Z Nation "Duel" (N)		Van Helsing (N)		Z Nation "Duel"	
CABLE	TBS	59	Seinfeld	Seinf. "The Red Dot"	Seinfeld "The Pick"	Seinf. "The Strike"	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Search Party	Search Party
CABLE	TCM	56	Love Me Tonight	:45 The Prizefighter & the Lady A boxer falls for a nightclub singer who becomes his lucky charm at his fights.				Night Flight (1933, Drama) Helen Hayes, Clark Gable, John Barrymore.			★★ Thirteen Women Irene Dunne.		:15 ★★ Scarlet River Tom Keene.	
CABLE	TLC	49	Yes Dress	Yes Dress	A Haunting		A Haunting		A Haunting (N)		Kindred Spirits (N)		A Haunting	
CABLE	TNT	57	Bones		Bones		★★★★ Star Wars: Episode IV: A New Hope					:35 Star Wars: Episode V: The...		
CABLE	UNI	21	Incluido	Noticiero	La rosa de Guadalupe		Despertar contigo		Vino el amor		El color de la pasion		Impacto	Noticie.
CABLE	USA	58	Law&O: SVU "Waste"		Modern	Modern	Modern	Modern	Modern	Modern	Modern	Modern	Modern	Modern
CABLE	WE	118	Boot Camp: Reali (N)		:10 Boot Camp: Reali		:20 Marriage Boot Camp			:35 Boot Camp: Reali		:40 Boot Camp: Reali		BootCamp
CABLE	WGN		★★ Troy Brad Pitt.		★★ Troy (2004, Action) Orlando Bloom, Eric Bana, Brad Pitt.						Rules	Rules	Rules	Rules
PREMIUM	STZ ENC	644	Movie	:50 ★★ McFarland, USA ('15, Dra) Kevin Costner.					★★★ School Ties			:50 The Quick and the Dead		
PREMIUM	HBO	518	Gods of Egypt Gerard Butler.			Vice News	★★ Self/ Less ('15, Sci-Fi) Ben Kingsley.				Vice (N)		★★★★ The Martian	
PREMIUM	HBO2	520	:10 How to Be Single Dakota Johnson.				Westworld "The Bicameral Mind"			Hitman: Agent 47 Rupert Friend.			:10 Jackie Brown	
PREMIUM	HBO3	521	:20 ★★★ The Wedding Singer				Real Sports		Mr. Right Sam Rockwell.			:45 ★★ Ted 2 Seth MacFarlane.		
PREMIUM	MAX	549	:20 ★★ Eagle Eye ('08, Act) Shia LaBeouf.				:20 ★ I Spy ('02, Spy) Eddie Murphy.				★★★ Shaft Richard Roundtree.			Movie
PREMIUM	SHOW	578	:15 ★★ Cold Souls ('09, Com) Paul Giamatti.				The Affair		Madonna: Rebel Heart Tour (N)				MadonnaRebelHear	
PREMIUM	STARZ	621	:10 ★★ Fever Pitch Drew Barrymore.				:55 ★★★ The Day After Tomorrow				Ash/Evil	Blunt Talk	Avengers: Age of ...	

NIGHT OWL

	STATION		12 AM	12:30	1 AM	1:30	2 AM	2:30	3 AM	3:30	4 AM	4:30	5 AM	5:30
FOX	(11)KFFX	11	:05 Friends	:35 Hot In	:05 CR TV Featuring a selection of products and services.								CRTV	
FOX	KPTV	3	2 Broke G.	TMZ	Dish	Queens	Raising	Celeb	Paid	Paid	CARS.TV	Paid	Paid	Paid
CBS	(19)KEPR	2	S. Colbert	:35 James Corden		:35 Paid	:05 Paid	:35 Paid	:05 Spaces	:35 Paid	:05 Traveler	:35 Paid	Morning Saturday (N)	
CBS	KOIN	19	S. Colbert	:35 James Corden		:35 Insider	:05 Paid	OurWorld	Paid	Paid	CBS This Morning Saturday (N)			
NBC	(25)KNDU	6	Tonight	:35 Seth Meyers		:35 C. Daly	:05 Today Show		Mad Money		1st Look	Fam. Feud	Paid	Today (N)
NBC	KGW	8	Tonight	:35 Seth Meyers		:35 C. Daly	:05 Steve Harvey (N)		Mad Money		1st Look	Paid	Paid	Paid
ABC	(42)KVEW	4	:05 Nightl.	:35 Paid	:05 Paid	:35 Paid	Paid	Paid	Columbo "Negative Reaction"				Gom. Pyle	Gom. Pyle
ABC	KATU	5	J. Kimmel	:35 Nightl.	:05 Paid	:35 Paid	:05 Paid	:35 Paid	:05 Paid	:35 Paid	DestinTV	Paid	Paid	Paid
PBS	(31)KTNW		SongCent	T. Smiley	W.Week	CharlieR	First You Dream: The		Hitmakers		Antiques Roadshow		This Old House Hour	
PBS	(59)OPB	13	PBS NewsHour		W.Week	To Be Announced							Business	BBC News