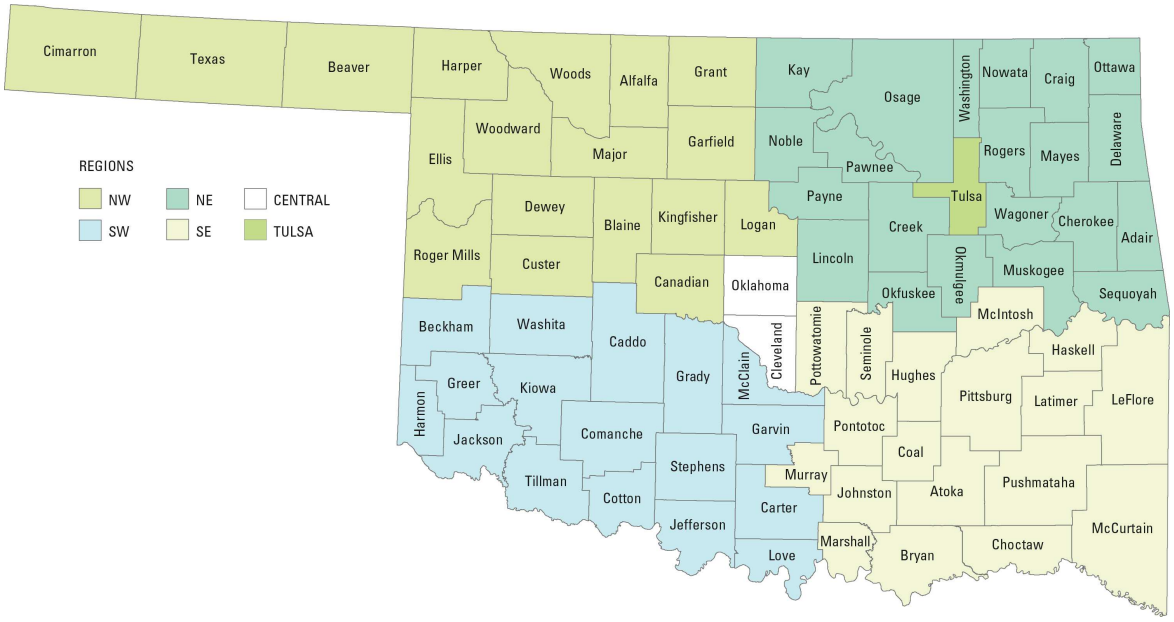
DATA GUIDE

The purpose of the *State of the State's Health Report* is to explain how various health outcomes and behaviors affect the overall health status of Oklahoma residents, as well as to guide the reader in how to interpret the data provided. Grades and ranks are provided to help identify patterns (not statistical differences) that occur across the state, over time, and within particular groups.

Data for each health indicator is based on the most reliable, consistent data sources that are currently available. Although the most recent data are reported, there are some data collection lags which prevent us from having complete trends through 2013. Indicators have been updated for the state and for each county, however, in order to preserve confidentiality and reliability, we are unable to provide data if we have fewer than five people in a particular group.

Grades were created by comparing each indicator to the national average. While individual rates are important, it is also important to see how we compare to the nation overall. A "C" grade was assigned to those indicators that were similar to the national average. An "A" or a "B" indicated that the rates were better than the national average; a "D" or an "F" indicated the rates were worse than the national average. If the grade for an indicator improved or worsened over time, we added a thumbs-up/down icon next to the trend data to indicate a change in Oklahoma's ranking compared to the nation over time.

Because Oklahoma is so diverse, it is important that we look at outcomes by county. Even so, it is very difficult to obtain enough data on every risk behavior at the county level. In order to compensate for this, we have applied advanced statistical modeling techniques to create county-level estimates for those indicators that were collected using the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. As a result, you may see some small differences in the estimates and the grades that were calculated using the different methods. For example, the Tulsa regional estimates are based on direct survey data and the Tulsa County estimates were based on modeled estimates.

For additional and more specific information on the methods we used, please refer to the Technical Notes section of this report.