AMERICANS ARE FITTER LONGER
The overall disability rates have dropped for older Americans. The percentage of people 70 and older who reported a disability that affected their ability to take care of themselves declined from 23 percent in 1982 to 16 percent in 2002, according to the results of a new study. However, the study also found that declines in disability rates were smaller for people who are very poor and with the least education.

NEW WEB SITE PROVIDES ON HOSPITAL QUALITY
Hospital Compare, a new website launched by a partnership of private and public organizations, provides health consumers with the information they need to compare the quality of care hospitals provide. The information on the website has been provided primarily by hospitals participating in a national project called the Hospital Quality Alliance (HQA): Improving Care Through Information. To compare the quality of care for hospitals in your area, visit the Hospital Compare website www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov.

HEALTHY AGING
Myth: Health inevitably declines as we get older. Reality: People at any age can improve their health by adopting healthy behaviors. Research has shown that healthy lifestyles have a greater impact than genetic factors on our health as we age. People who are physically active, eat a healthy diet, do not use tobacco, and practice other healthy behaviors reduce their risk for chronic diseases and have half the rate of disability of those who do not.

ANTIBACTERIAL SOAPS NO BETTER AT CLEANING HANDS
Antibacterial soaps containing triclosan are no more effective than plain soap in cleaning hands, reducing bacteria, and preventing common infections found in a household setting according to the results of a new study. Allison Aiello, assistant professor of epidemiology at the University of Michigan School of Public Health and lead researcher for the study, thinks it is unnecessary to use antibacterial soaps in a home setting based on the research.

MORE AMERICANS GOING ONLINE FOR WELLNESS INFO
Nearly 95 million Americans use the Internet to find health information according to a 2005 survey conducted for the Pew Internet and American Life Project. Searching for information on specific diseases and medical problems was the most sought-after health information. But the survey (an update to one conducted in 2002) also found that there
has been a dramatic increase in searching the Internet for wellness information on such topics as diet, nutrition, and exercise.

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