Geography trumps genes in determining lifespan

Living in the Southeast is bad for your health.

There is a huge range in the death rates across American states, driven by public policy, regional habits and socioeconomics, Tom Frieden, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said Thursday.

"Your longevity and health are more determined by your ZIP code than they are by your genetic code," he said.

The death rate from the five major causes varies at least twofold between the healthiest states – such as Colorado, Utah and Vermont – and the least healthy, most of which are found in the Southeast, Frieden said, citing a new CDC study.

"These deaths are not random. They are clustered by geography," he said. "That's a reflection of the huge impact that healthier policies can have."

Read the full, original story: [CDC: Lifespan more to do with geography than genetics](#)