



## C. Everett Koop

13<sup>th</sup> Surgeon General (1982-1989)

Charles Everett Koop was born in Brooklyn, New York on October 14, 1916. He obtained his B.A. degree from Dartmouth College in 1937 and his M.D. degree from Cornell Medical School in 1941. After interning at the Pennsylvania Hospital, Koop pursued postgraduate training at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Boston Children's Hospital, and the Graduate School of Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania (where he obtained a D.Sc. Degree in 1947). At the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, he became professor of pediatric surgery and professor of pediatrics.

From 1948 to 1981, Koop was also Surgeon-in-Chief at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. There he became a pioneer in the field of pediatric surgery, and established one of the best departments in the field in the country, including the Nation's first neonatal intensive care nursery. He also helped to establish the American Academy of Pediatric Surgeons and its journal.

In February, 1981, President Reagan appointed Koop as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health. Despite opposition, Dr. Koop was confirmed by the Senate and officially sworn in as Surgeon General on January 21, 1982.

Koop proved to be an outspoken anti-smoking advocate. Although the Public Health Service had been calling attention to the danger of tobacco smoking since the 1964 Surgeon General's report on smoking and health, its low-key campaign was invigorated by Koop's persistent efforts to speak out on the subject. The 1986 Surgeon General's report on the dangers of passive smoking was also an important milestone in the fight against smoking.

As the Nation began to recognize HIV and AIDS, Koop became the chief Federal spokesperson. At President Reagan's request, Koop wrote a report on AIDS in 1986. It provided accurate, comprehensive information on this frightening disease. Koop personally penned "Understanding AIDS," the PHS brochure that was sent to all households in the United States in 1988, the largest public health mailing ever.

Koop also did much to revitalize the PHS Commissioned Corps, and oversaw the centennial celebration of the Corps in 1989. Koop's high-profile positions on topics such as tobacco, AIDS, organ transplantation, and the rights of the disabled also made the office of Surgeon General probably as prominent as it has ever been. He continues to educate the public about health issues through his writings and the electronic media. Dr. Koop also serves as Senior Scholar of the C. Everett Koop Institute at Dartmouth University and is chair or a member of various boards of health-related groups.