



Quick Stats for the U.S.

- Every 8 seconds a baby is born in the U.S.
- Every hour 3 babies die.
- African American infants are more than twice as likely to die before their first birthday as white infants.
- Birth defects are the leading cause of infant mortality, accounting for nearly 1 in 5 infant deaths.
- Every 3 ½ minutes a baby is born with a birth defect.*
- Each year 2,500 babies are born with birth defects of the brain and spinal cord.
- Prematurity/low birthweight is the second leading cause of all infant deaths and the leading cause of infant deaths among African Americans.
- About 1 in 8 babies is born preterm (less than 37 weeks gestation).
- Every 2 minutes a low birthweight baby is born (less than 5½ pounds).
- Every year nearly 4,100 babies are born weighing less than one pound.
- More than 1 in 27 babies are born to mothers who started prenatal care in the 3rd trimester or received no prenatal care at all.
- The U.S. infant mortality rate is higher than 26 other nations.

On an Average Day in the U.S.

11,120
babies are born

1,280
babies are born preterm
(less than 37 weeks gestation)

841
babies are born low birthweight
(less than 2500 grams or 5½ pounds)

418
babies are born to mothers who started prenatal care
in the 3rd trimester or who received no prenatal care at all

411
babies are born with a birth defect*

212
babies are born very preterm
(less than 32 weeks gestation)

159
babies are born very low birthweight
(less than 1500 grams or 3½ pounds)

76
babies die before reaching their first birthday

Based on 2000 final natality and 1999 final linked birth/infant death data from the National Center for Health Statistics and * estimates from the CDC.

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Note: Numbers are approximations

* Based on a CDC annual estimate of 150,000 babies born with birth defects
Source: National Center for Health Statistics, 2000 final natality and
1999 linked birth/infant death data

Prepared by March of Dimes Perinatal Data Center, 2002

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Perinatal Statistics • United States • 2000

		Maternal Race					Maternal Ethnicity						
		U.S. Total	White	Black	Native American	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic Total	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Central/ South American	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black
Births	Number	4,058,814	3,194,005	622,598	41,668	200,543	815,868	581,915	58,124	13,429	113,344	2,362,968	604,346
	Fertility Rate ¹	67.5	66.5	71.7	71.4	70.7	105.9	115.1	84.3	57.3	94.3 ⁵	58.5	73.7
Births To Teens < 20 yrs	Number	477,509	337,452	122,762	8,215	9,080	132,107	99,075	11,611	1,012	11,167	205,896	119,755
	Percentage	11.8	10.6	19.7	19.7	4.5	16.2	17.0	20.0	7.5	9.9	8.7	19.8
Low Birthweight	Number	307,030	208,818	80,778	2,811	14,623	52,247	34,942	5,403	872	7,187	155,648	79,243
	Percentage	7.6	6.5	13.0	6.8	7.3	6.4	6.0	9.3	6.5	6.3	6.6	13.1
Very Low Birthweight	Number	57,967	36,309	19,078	484	2,096	9,333	5,993	1,122	162	1,361	26,786	18,733
	Percentage	1.4	1.1	3.1	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.9	1.2	1.2	1.1	3.1
Preterm	Number	467,201	335,815	106,675	5,211	19,500	89,696	62,271	7,817	1,424	12,263	244,932	104,375
	Percentage	11.6	10.6	17.3	12.7	9.9	11.2	11.0	13.5	10.6	11.0	10.4	17.4
Very Preterm	Number	77,519	49,029	24,974	808	2,708	13,522	8,922	1,454	240	1,921	35,353	24,502
	Percentage	1.9	1.6	4.0	2.0	1.4	1.7	1.6	2.5	1.8	1.7	1.5	4.1
Early Prenatal Care	Number	3,284,256	2,649,231	444,508	27,961	162,556	587,297	411,137	43,695	12,166	84,644	2,049,290	431,660
	Percentage	83.2	85.0	74.3	69.3	84.0	74.4	72.9	78.5	91.7	77.6	88.5	74.3
Adequate Prenatal Care	Number	2,870,998	2,317,121	390,178	22,974	140,725	503,770	353,821	36,765	10,818	71,499	1,802,137	379,662
	Percentage	74.1	75.7	67.1	58.1	73.9	65.6	64.7	67.4	82.3	67.1	79.0	67.2
Infant Deaths ³	Number	27,864	18,136	8,480	373	876	4,362	2,979	477	61	483	13,522	8,327
	Rate ⁴	7.0	5.8	14.0	9.3	4.8	5.7	5.5	8.3	4.6	4.7	5.8	14.1

¹ Rate per 1,000 women 15-44 years

² Rate per 1,000 women 15-19 years

³ 1999 linked birth/infant death data

⁴ Rate per 1,000 live births

⁵ Includes Central/South American and other and unknown Hispanic

Source: National Center for Health Statistics

2000 final natality data and 1999 linked birth/infant death data

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Low birthweight is less than 2500 grams (5½ pounds)

Very low birthweight is less than 1500 grams (3½ pounds)

Preterm is less than 37 weeks gestation

Very preterm is less than 32 weeks gestation

Early prenatal care starts in the first trimester of pregnancy (1-3 months)

Adequate prenatal care is pregnancy-related care beginning in the first four months of pregnancy with the appropriate number of visits for gestational age (Adequate/Adequate Plus according to the Adequacy of Prenatal Care Utilization Index)