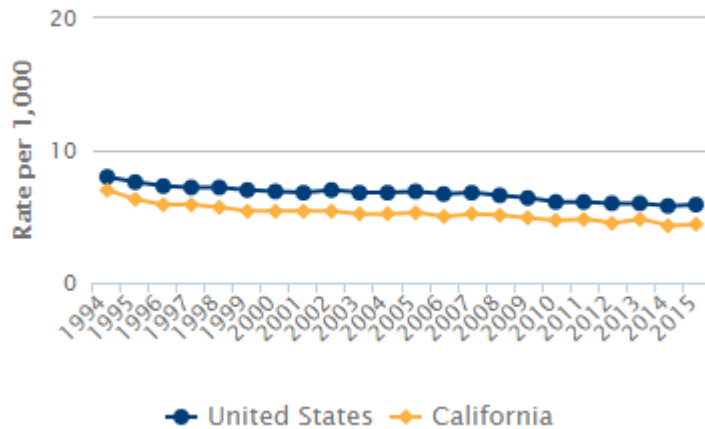


Infant Mortality in California

Infant Mortality Rate



Definition: Number of deaths among children under age 1 per 1,000 live births (e.g., in 2015, there were 4.4 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in California).

Data Source: National Center for Health Statistics, [Linked Birth / Infant Death Records](#) (Sept. 2017).

Infant Mortality Rate: 2013-2015

Locations	Rate per 1,000
California	4.5
Alameda County	4.1
Contra Costa County	3.8
Fresno County	7.8
Kern County	6.4
Los Angeles County	4.2
Orange County	3.2
Riverside County	4.2
Sacramento County	5.1
San Bernardino County	6.0
San Diego County	4.0
San Francisco County	3.1
San Joaquin County	6.3
San Mateo County	2.8
Santa Clara County	3.2
Ventura County	5.2

Definition: Number of deaths among children under age 1 per 1,000 live births (e.g., in 2013-2015, there were 4.5 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in California).

Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, Death Statistical Master Files; National Center for Health Statistics, [Linked Birth / Infant Death Records](#) (Sept. 2017).

What It Is

Kidsdata.org provides the following measures of infant mortality:

- Infant mortality rate, as three-year averages
- Infant mortality rate by leading cause of death,* as three-year averages
- Infant mortality rate by mother's race/ethnicity, as five-year averages

Single-year data on the number and rate of infant deaths in California and the U.S. also are available.

Why This Topic Is Important

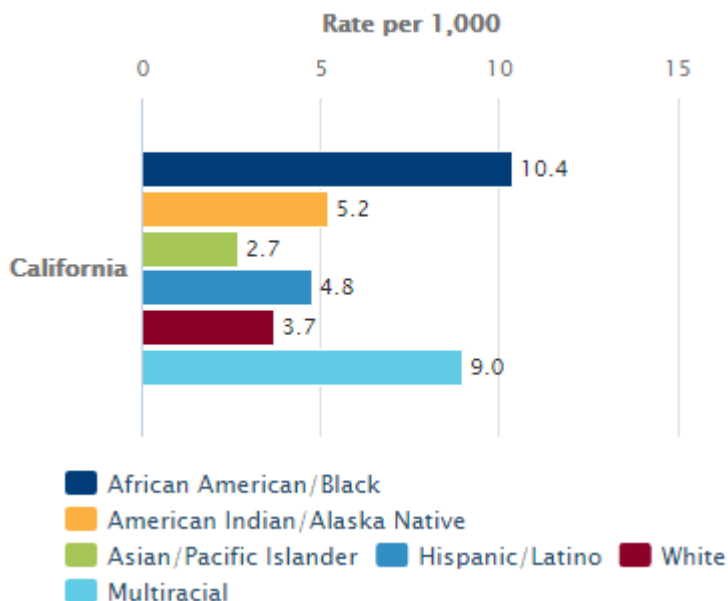
Infant mortality is a key measure of a nation's health, as it reflects socioeconomic conditions, public health practices, maternal health, and access to high-quality medical care, among other factors (1, 2). Major causes of infant mortality include congenital malformations or abnormalities (birth defects), disorders relating to short gestation and low birthweight, maternal complications of pregnancy, and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (3). Reducing infant mortality requires wide-ranging approaches that improve primary care prior to pregnancy, prenatal and well-baby preventive care, specialty care for preterm infants and those with health conditions, breastfeeding support, and immunizations, along with empowered communities creating safe, healthy environments for all families (1).

Although the U.S. infant mortality rate has declined in recent decades, it remains higher than rates in most other developed countries (1, 2). The infant mortality rate among African American/black mothers is particularly high—more than double the rate for white, Latino, and Asian/Pacific Islander groups, both nationally and in California (3, 4).

How Children Are Faring

California's infant mortality rate declined by 37% between 1994 and 2015, from 7 infant deaths per 1,000 live births to 4.4 per 1,000, echoing national trends. At the county level, infant mortality rates range widely, from 2.8 (San Mateo) to 8.1 (Mendocino) among counties with data in 2013-15. Statewide, in 2013-15 and in previous years, the leading causes of infant death were birth defects and disorders related to preterm birth and low birthweight.

Infant Mortality Rate, by Race/Ethnicity of Mother: 2011-2015



Definition: Number of deaths among children under age 1 per 1,000 live births, by race/ethnicity of mother (e.g., in 2011-2015, there were 10.4 infant deaths per 1,000 live births to African American/black mothers in California).

Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, Death Statistical Master Files; National Center for Health Statistics, [Linked Birth / Infant Death Records](#) (Sept. 2017).

Infant Mortality Rate, by Leading Cause of Death: 2013-2015

California	Rate per 1,000
Birth Defects	1.1
Disorders Related to Short Gestation and Low Birthweight	0.7
Maternal Complications of Pregnancy	0.4
Newborns Affected by Complications of Placenta, Cord, and Membranes	0.2
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome	0.3

Definition: Number of deaths among children under age 1 per 1,000 live births, by five leading causes of infant death in California (e.g., in 2013-2015, there were 1.1 infant deaths due to birth defects per 1,000 live births in California).

Data Source: California Dept. of Public Health, Death Statistical Master Files; National Center for Health Statistics, [Linked Birth / Infant Death Records](#) (Sept. 2017).

Disparities persist in infant mortality rates by race/ethnicity. Statewide, among groups with data in 2011-15, infants born to African American/black and multiracial mothers died at rates of at least 9 per 1,000, whereas Asian/Pacific Islander and white mothers had infant mortality rates below 4 per 1,000.

View references for this text and additional research on this topic:

<https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/54/infant-mortality/summary>



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