



Infant Mortality Factsheet



What is Infant Death?

- The death of a child under one year of age.
- The infant death rate (also called Infant Mortality Rate, IMR) is the number of deaths for babies under one year-of-age in a given year for every 1000 live births in the same year. It is one of the key measures of the health and wellbeing of a community, state, or country.
- The top leading causes of death among babies in this age group include:
 - ♦ congenital abnormalities (conditions present at birth as a result of genetic or environmental influences)
 - ♦ pre-term birth
 - ♦ low birth weight
 - ♦ Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
 - ♦ problems related to pregnancy complications.

Infant Death in Kansas

- Although Kansas' low birth weight and prematurity rates have been *better* than the US rates, the state's infant mortality rate has been *losing ground* compared to the national average. In 2007, Kansas' rate was 17 percent higher than the US rate (7.94 versus 6.77).
- Kansas ranks number 1 in the nation for black infant mortality (2007).
- Infant mortality among black infants is more than double that of the rate among white infants. Black babies represent 7 percent of births and 17 percent of deaths.

- Across all races and ethnicities, most women who experienced the death of their babies were single mothers under 20 years -of-age with less than a high school education.

What Causes Infant Death?

The social conditions in which we are born, live, and work deeply affect our health and longevity.

Studies have found there are many factors that affect health outcomes:

- employment, and economic security
- education
- environmental quality (air, water, etc.)
- health care access
- community safety and security
- social support (connection to family, friends, community)
- maternal nutrition
- stress, racism, etc

No one factor can be singled out as the cause of infant death. Research on infant death suggests these same factors play a role in the health of mothers and their babies in regards to infant death.

Want More Information?

Contact the Kansas Blue Ribbon Panel on Infant Mortality:

http://datacounts.net/infant_mortality

References

- Kansas Maternal & Child Health 2015 Needs Assessment
- National Center for Vital Statistics, Final Report: Deaths in 2007