

Preterm birth rate drops

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Table of Preterm Birth by State, Final 2006 and Preliminary 2007

State	2006			2007		
	Rate	Rate	Change	Rate	Rate	Change
Alabama	12.0	11.7	0.3	11.8	11.5	0.3
Alaska	11.0	10.8	0.2	10.8	10.5	0.3
Arizona	11.0	10.7	0.3	10.6	10.3	0.3
Arkansas	11.0	10.8	0.2	10.7	10.4	0.3
California	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Colorado	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Connecticut	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Delaware	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
District of Columbia	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Florida	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Georgia	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Hawaii	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Idaho	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Illinois	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Indiana	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Iowa	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Kansas	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Kentucky	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Louisiana	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Maine	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Maryland	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Massachusetts	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Michigan	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Minnesota	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Mississippi	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Missouri	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Montana	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Nebraska	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Nevada	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
New Hampshire	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
New Jersey	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
New Mexico	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
New York	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
North Carolina	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
North Dakota	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Ohio	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Oklahoma	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Oregon	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Pennsylvania	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Rhode Island	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
South Carolina	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
South Dakota	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Tennessee	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Texas	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Utah	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Vermont	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Virginia	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Washington	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
West Virginia	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Wisconsin	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3
Wyoming	10.7	10.5	0.2	10.4	10.1	0.3

These are the rates of preterm birth by state, final 2006 and preliminary 2007 data. Source: National Center for Health Statistics, 2006 final and 2007 preliminary natality data. Prepared by March of Dimes Perinatal Data Center, March 2009.

The nation's preterm birth rate declined slightly in 2007 - a finding that the March of Dimes hopes will prove to be the start of a new trend in improved maternal and infant health.

The [preterm birth](#) rate declined for babies born at 34-36 weeks gestation (late preterm) and among babies born to African American and white women.

"We're encouraged by this drop in the preterm [birth rate](#), and hope that the emphasis we've put on the problem of late preterm birth is beginning to make a difference," said Jennifer L. Howse, Ph.D., president of the March of Dimes. "Through our Prematurity Campaign, we can build on this success and begin to give more babies a healthy start in life."

The rate of preterm births (less than 37 weeks gestation) dropped to 12.7 percent from 12.8 percent in 2006, a small but statistically significant decrease, according to preliminary birth data for 2007 released by the National Center for Health Statistics.

The preterm birth rate has increased by 36 percent since the 1980s, and despite the decline in the 2007 preterm birth rate, the number of babies born too soon continues to top more than 540,000 each year.

Preterm birth is a serious health problem that costs the United States more than \$26 billion annually, according to the Institute of Medicine. It is the leading cause of [newborn death](#) and babies who survive an early birth often face the risk of lifetime health challenges, such as [breathing problems](#), mental retardation and others. Even babies born just a few weeks too soon (34-36 weeks gestation, also known as late preterm birth) have higher rates of death and disability than full-term babies.

Source: March of Dimes Foundation

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