

## Breastfeeding initiation varies by race/ethnicity across U.S.

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There is considerable racial/ethnic variation in breastfeeding initiation

across the United States, according to research published in the May 28 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Katelyn V. Chiang, M.P.H., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues analyzed 2019 National Vital Statistics System birth certificate data for 3,129,646 births from 48 of 50 states and three U.S. territories to describe breastfeeding initiation by maternal race/ethnicity.

The researchers found that the prevalence of breastfeeding initiation was 84.1 percent overall, with variation by maternal race/ethnicity, from 90.3 to 73.6 percent among infants of Asian and Black mothers, respectively. The magnitude of the difference between the highest and lowest breastfeeding rates by racial/[ethnic groups](#) varied across states, from 6.6 to 37.6 percent in Vermont and North Dakota, respectively; there was also variation observed in the specific racial/ethnic groups with the highest and lowest rates.

"Although breastfeeding can help reduce risks for several maternal and infant health conditions, infants from some racial/ethnic minorities who are already at the highest risk for these conditions are often among the least likely to be breastfed," the authors write. "These data might be useful to state and territorial public health practitioners in identifying specific racial/ethnic disparities on which to focus efforts to improve breastfeeding support."

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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