



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
Dave A. Chokshi, MD MSc
Commissioner

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HISTORICALLY LOW INFANT MORTALITY RATE AND FEWER BIRTHS IN NEW YORK CITY IN 2018, ANNUAL VITAL STATISTICS DATA SHOWS

*Infant mortality reaches historic low of 3.9 deaths per 1,000 live births,
yet race and ethnic disparities remain*

*Teen birth rates fell 55.1% over the last 10 years. The citywide
birth rate fell 12.3% in the same period.*

January 4, 2021 – The Health Department released the [2018 Summary of Vital Statistics](#) today, which found that life expectancy in New York City increased over the last decade to 81.3 years. Life expectancy also increased across all racial and ethnic groups over the past 10 years. Teen birth rates fell from 2009, with a 55.1% decline among people less than 20 years of age.

“In the last decade, we’ve made some great strides in improving health outcomes for New Yorkers,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Dave A. Chokshi**. “Nevertheless, we must continue to address disparities and reach greater racial, ethnic and neighborhood equity in those outcomes. Racism is a public health crisis—we have seen its pernicious effects during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it shows in this data too.”

The Summary of Vital Statistics provides an overview of birth and death events in New York City. These data are derived from vital event certificates filed with the Bureau of Vital Statistics. Summaries dating to 1961 are available on the Health Department’s website.

Though the data show strides forward for New Yorkers’ health outcomes, there remain areas of concern. Black New Yorkers still had the shortest life expectancy, at 77.2 years, compared to 82.4 years among Hispanics and 81.3 years among non-Hispanic whites. People living in very high-poverty neighborhoods had a premature death rate 2.4 times as high as people living in low-poverty neighborhoods, a slight increase from 2017.

The infant mortality rate reached a new low of 3.9 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2018, representing 9.3% decrease from 2017. However, the infant mortality rate for non-Hispanic Black New Yorkers was 3.4 times higher than the rate for non-Hispanic white New Yorkers.

The Health Department continues to strive for the goals set in the OneNYC strategic plan, which looks to lower the premature mortality rate by 25% by 2040.

Life Expectancy

- New York City's life expectancy at birth in 2018 was 81.3 years, increasing by 0.1 years since 2017, and increasing by 0.7 years since 2009.
- The New York City 2018 life expectancy at birth was 82.4 years among Hispanics, 81.3 years among non-Hispanic whites, and 77.2 years among non-Hispanic Blacks. From 2009 to 2018, life expectancy increased by 0.7 years among Hispanics, 0.4 years among non-Hispanic whites, and 0.6 years among non-Hispanic Blacks.

Pregnancy Outcomes

- The 2018 citywide crude birth rate was 13.6 births per 1,000 population. New York City's birth rate remained the same as 2017 and decreased by 12.3% since 2009.
- In 2018, the birth rate was highest among Asians and Pacific Islanders at 15.4 births per 1,000 population, followed by 15.0 among non-Hispanic whites, 12.9 among Hispanics, and 11.4 among non-Hispanic Blacks.
- From 2009 to 2018, birth rates fell among all teenagers regardless of age, and the overall rate of teen birth (births to people <20) declined by 55.1%. Among teens less than 18 years of age, the birth rate declined over that period by 62.4%; among those who were ages 18-19, it declined by 52.4%.
- The rates of induced and spontaneous terminations of pregnancy both continued to decline from 2017 to 2018, decreasing by 5% and 6.8%, respectively.

Premature Mortality (death before age 65)

- New York City's 2018 age-adjusted premature death rate was 187.1 deaths per 100,000 population, a 1.2% increase from 2017. The small increase is partially attributed to a 3.2% population decrease among those under the age of 65 from 2017 to 2018. Over the past 10 years, the city's age-adjusted premature death rate declined by 10%.
- From 2009 to 2018, age-adjusted premature death rates declined by 10.9% among non-Hispanic Blacks, 11.6% among Hispanics, 10.8% among non-Hispanic whites, and increased by 4.1% among Asians and Pacific Islanders.
- The age-adjusted premature mortality rate decreased across all categories of neighborhood poverty between 2009 and 2018. However, the rate between neighborhoods with very high poverty and neighborhoods with very low poverty remains pronounced. Neighborhoods with very high poverty experienced an age-adjusted premature mortality rate that was 2.4 times the rate in neighborhoods with low poverty in 2018. The disparity increased slightly from 2017, when it was 2.1 times.
- The three leading causes of premature death in 2018 were cancer, heart disease, and drug-related (includes chronic use and unintentional overdose).

Mortality

- Though the citywide age-adjusted death rate decreased by 12.3% since 2009, the rate increased by 1.7% between 2017 and 2018, from 545.7 per 100,000 population to 555.1 in 2018.
- From 2017 to 2018, the age-adjusted death rate increased among Hispanics by 2.2%, among non-Hispanic Blacks by 3.1%, among non-Hispanic whites by 0.3%, and among

Asians and Pacific Islanders by 1.4%. The increase of rates was partially due to the 2.6% population decrease from 2017 to 2018.

- The three leading causes of death in 2018 were heart disease, cancer, and influenza/pneumonia.
- HIV disease has dropped from the 4th leading cause in 2000, and the 9th leading cause in 2009, to the 16th in 2018.
- The age-adjusted mortality rate in neighborhoods with very high poverty was 1.6 times the rate in neighborhoods with low poverty in 2018, reflecting an increase in disparity from 10 years ago – the rate was 1.5 times as high in 2009.
- Deaths due to unintentional drug overdose continued to rise, with a 1.2% increase from 2017.

Infant Mortality

- In 2018, New York City's infant mortality rate reached a low of 3.9 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, a decrease since 2017 (4.3 per 1,000 live births). Due to the small number of deaths, the rate will fluctuate from year to year.
- The infant mortality rate disparity between non-Hispanic Blacks and non-Hispanic whites increased slightly from 3.3 in 2017 to 3.4 in 2018. The disparity in infant mortality rates between Puerto Ricans and non-Hispanic whites decreased from 2.6 in 2017 to 2.3 in 2018. These changes may be due to small counts from year to year.
- From 2009 to 2018, the infant mortality rate declined in all poverty groups: by 20.0% in both low and medium poverty areas, by 39.2% in high poverty areas, and by 33.8% in very high poverty areas.
- Despite these gains, infant mortality rate in high poverty areas was 1.5 times the infant mortality rate in low poverty areas.

About OneNYC

The goal of OneNYC: The Plan for a Strong and Just City is to ensure that all New Yorkers live a long and healthy life. Premature mortality is closely tied to neighborhood poverty, which, in New York City correlates with communities of color that have long undergone structural and historical oppression. Under the OneNYC plan for 2040, the City has committed to reducing the premature mortality rate by 25%.

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