

About the Los Angeles Health Overview of a Pregnancy Event Project

The Los Angeles Health Overview of a Pregnancy Event (LA HOPE) is a public health surveillance project developed by the Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Programs of Los Angeles County in 2006. The LA HOPE Project collects countywide population-based data on the attitudes and experiences of women before, during, and shortly after they have suffered a fetal or infant loss.

Purpose

The overall purpose of the LA HOPE Project is to reduce infant morbidity and mortality and to promote maternal health by improving maternal and child health programs, policies, and maternal behaviors during pregnancy and early infancy. LA HOPE provides data for county health officials and community partners to use in order to make decisions designed to improve the health of mothers and infants in Los Angeles County and to improve the grief and bereavement support services offered to them.

Using the LA HOPE 2007-2009 Data Book

This data book represents findings from the 2007-2009 LA HOPE Project. Nine hundred thirty-eight eligible respondents were surveyed, representing 4,409 fetal and infant losses in Los Angeles County during 2007-2009. The data were weighted by the respondents' selection probability, which allows the percentage (prevalence) reported in this document to represent the entire population of infant and fetal deaths in Los Angeles County in the years 2007 – 2009.

Through the release of this report, the Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Programs hope that these data can be used to monitor and assess trends, to plan and evaluate programs, and to direct policy decisions, with the ultimate goal of improving the health of mothers and infants in Los Angeles County. The LA HOPE Project recommends that readers review the Technical Notes section of this report, which includes the methodology and details of the sampling, data weighting, response rate, strengths and limitations of the data, and a glossary of maternal and infant health terms.

The LA HOPE 2007-2009 Data Book covers a wide range of health topics, including:

- Preconception health (health before pregnancy)
- Prenatal care and maternal medical conditions during pregnancy
- Psychosocial conditions during pregnancy
- Behavioral risk factors
- Postpartum care
- Grief and bereavement support

Each section of the report contains tables displaying estimates by Race/Ethnicity and Service Planning Area (SPA). In every table, county-level estimates are provided so that comparisons may be made between subpopulations and the county total.

To address uncertainty about each estimate, the Relative Standardized Error (RSE) was calculated to determine the stability of each estimate. An asterisk (*) next to an estimate cautions the readers that the estimate is statistically unstable and therefore may not be appropriate to use for planning or policy purposes.

Major highlights from this report:

The following are based on weighted sample representing women who experienced an infant or fetal loss in Los Angeles County between 2007 and 2009:

- One in three (34%) women were uninsured before their pregnancies. The prevalence was highest for Latina women (42%) and lowest for Asian/Pacific Islander women (14%).
- More than three-quarters (76%) of women reported that they did not receive preconception health counseling. The prevalence was highest for Latina women (80%) and lowest for White women (57%).
- Thirteen percent of women reported that they smoked cigarettes during the six months before they became pregnant, and 4% continued to smoke during their pregnancies. African American women reported the highest prevalence of smoking six month before pregnancy (20%) and during pregnancy (10%).
- More than half of (55%) women reported that they were overweight or obese just before they became pregnant. The prevalence was highest among African American (63%) and lowest among White (35%) women.
- More than one in four (28%) women suffered from previous miscarriages. The prevalence varied across racial/ethnic groups, ranging from 25% for Latina women to 34% for African American.
- Thirty-nine percent of women had prenatal care that did not meet US Public Health Service (PHS) guidelines.
- One in six and one in seven (17% and 14%) women experienced a previous preterm or low birth weight birth, respectively.
- More than one in three (37%) women reported experiencing labor pain three weeks before their due date.
- Over one-third (34%) of women reported using illegal drugs or drugs not prescribed by a doctor.
- One in ten women (12%) reported drinking alcohol, with White women reporting twice (24%) the county prevalence. This, however, does not take into account whether or not pregnancy status was known.
- Forty-one percent of women reported having depressed mood during their pregnancy.
- Four percent of women reported being homeless during their pregnancies.
- Most women (71%) were offered information regarding support groups or individual counseling, but only 15% attended.