



Lancaster General Health



Lancaster County Health Data Updates

January 2014

Recently Updated Health Indicators:



Babies with Low Birth Weight

	2011	2010	2009
Lancaster	6.5%	7.4%	6.9%
PA	8.2%	8.3%	8.4%
US	8.1%	8.1%	8.2%

The rate of babies born with a low birth weight in Lancaster County is consistently better than other PA and US counties. Lancaster County's rate also exceeds the Healthy People 2020 goal of 7.8%. Although the percentage of low birth weight babies born in Lancaster County appears to have decreased between 2010 and 2011, the confidence interval of the data illustrates that the rate has remained the same.



Mothers who Received Early Prenatal Care

	2011	2010	2009
Lancaster	62.0%	60.7%	63.8%
PA	71.7%	71.3%	70.9%

The rate of mothers who received early prenatal care in Lancaster County is consistently lower than other PA counties. Neither Lancaster County nor Pennsylvania meets the Healthy People 2020 goal of 77.9%. Although the percentage of mothers receiving early prenatal care in Lancaster County appears to have increased between 2010 and 2011, the confidence interval of the data illustrates that the rate has remained the same.



Mothers who Received No Prenatal Care

	2011	2010	2009
Lancaster	0.5%	0.3%	0.3%
PA	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%

Lancaster County rate of mothers who lacked prenatal care is consistently better than other PA counties. Although the percentage in Lancaster County appears to have increased between 2010 and 2011, the confidence interval of the data illustrates that the rate has remained the same.

Please direct questions to
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Why is This Information Important?

Babies with Low Birth Weight

Babies born with a low birth weight are more likely than babies of normal weight to require specialized medical care, and often must stay in the intensive care unit. Similar to national trends, there are a disparately high number of low birth weight babies born to mothers of Black/African-American descent in Lancaster County. Additionally, young mothers (under the age of 20) and older mothers (40-44) have the highest rate of low birth weight babies in the County.

Prenatal Care

Babies born to mothers who do not receive prenatal care are three times more likely to have a low birth weight and five times more likely to die than those born to mothers who do get care. Increasing the number of women who receive prenatal care, and who do so early in their pregnancies (within the first trimester), can improve birth outcomes and lower health care costs by reducing the likelihood of complications during pregnancy and childbirth. The trends illustrate that the vast majority of Lancaster County mothers received prenatal care at some point, but 38% did not receive care during their first trimester of pregnancy. Locally, Hispanic mothers were more likely to receive early prenatal care than other ethnicities. In addition, the rate of early prenatal care increases with age, with women aged 30-34 obtaining the earliest care. After age 35, the rate of early prenatal care gradually decreases among older mothers.

How Can YOU Make A Difference?

A list of promising practice initiatives can be found at www.lghealth.org/countyhealthdata.

What YOU can do:

- If you are currently pregnant be sure to get early prenatal medical care, take prenatal vitamins, stop smoking, stop drinking alcohol and using drugs, and include breastfeeding in your postpartum plan.
- If you do not have health insurance, you can apply for free prenatal and contraceptive care. In addition, Family Planning clinics offer free care to all teens less than 18 years old.
- If you are planning to become pregnant speak to your doctor about starting Folic Acid supplements and healthy lifestyle changes you make before becoming pregnant.

What the FAMILY can do:

- Encourage pregnant women to get prenatal medical care within the first three months of pregnancy, take prenatal vitamins, stop smoking, stop drinking alcohol and using drugs, and to breastfeed once their baby is born.

What SCHOOLS can do:

- Promote responsible sexual behavior to reduce unintended pregnancy and risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
- Ensure availability of information about community resources, such as Nurse Family Partnership, Healthy Beginnings Plus, and Family Planning Clinics available to students who are expectant parents

What EMPLOYERS can do:

- Encourage pregnant employees to get prenatal medical care within the first three months of pregnancy, take prenatal vitamins, stop smoking, stop drinking alcohol and using drugs, and to breastfeed once their baby is born.

What POLICY MAKERS can do:

- Support and promote programs like Nurse Family Partnership and Healthy Beginnings Plus, which provide access to care and ongoing health education to at-risk women.

New Year, New Health Indicators!

Check out the 17 newly added Health Indicators for Lancaster County at www.lghealth.org/countyhealthdata

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