



United States Maternity Care Facts and Figures December 2012

This fact sheet updates various national maternity statistics provided in [Evidence-Based Maternity Care: What It Is and What It Can Achieve](#) with new data now available.

Size of the Population Involved

In 2011, there were approximately 3.95 million births in the United States. This is down 1% from 2010, marking the second consecutive year that there have been fewer than 4 million births nationwide in over a decade.¹

Hospital Care of Childbearing Women and Newborns

Of those discharged from U.S. hospitals in 2009, 23% were childbearing women and newborns. Care of childbearing women and their newborns was by far the most common reason for hospitalization.²

Six of the ten most common hospital procedures in 2009 were maternity-related²:

<u>Maternal and Newborn Procedures</u>	<u>Rank Among All Procedures</u>
prophylactic vaccinations and inoculations	2
cesarean section	5
repair of obstetric laceration	6
circumcision	8
artificial rupture of membranes to assist delivery	9
fetal monitoring	10

Cesarean section, the most common operating room procedure in the country in 2009, was performed on 1.4 million women.² The 2010 cesarean rate of 32.8% marked the first dip in the national rate in over a decade,³ and the rate remained unchanged in 2011.¹ The cesarean rate varied across states in 2010, from a low of 22.6% in Alaska to a high of 39.7% in Louisiana. It reached 46.7% in Puerto Rico.³ The 2010 cesarean section rate varied slightly by payer — from private insurance (35%) to Medicaid (32%) to uninsured women (31%).⁴

The rate of vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC) was 9.2% in 2010, a rate that continues to decrease from a high of 35.3% in 1997.^{2*}

Maternity Outcomes

The rate of preterm birth rose from 10.6% in 1990 to an all-time high of 12.8% in 2006. It has since declined for five consecutive years to 11.7% in 2011.^{1,3} Across states, the 2010 preterm birth rate ranged from 8.4% in Vermont to 17.6% in Mississippi, and was 16.7% in Puerto Rico.

The rate of low birthweight has risen fairly steadily over a quarter century. This rate was 6.7% in 1984, reached 8.3% in 2006, declined modestly in 2007 to 8.2%, and then again in 2011 to 8.1%.^{1,3} Across states, the 2010 low birthweight rate ranged from 5.7% in Alaska to 12.1% in Mississippi.³

In comparison with both non-Hispanic white and Hispanic infants, non-Hispanic black infants experience much higher rates of both preterm birth and low birthweight.³

Paying for Maternity Care

All payers. Facility charges billed a combined total of \$111 billion for "mother's pregnancy and delivery" and "newborn infants" in 2010.⁴

Medicaid. In 2010, 45% of all maternal childbirth-related hospital stays were billed to Medicaid.⁴ The two most common conditions billed to Medicaid as the primary payer in 2010 were pregnancy and childbirth (24%) and newborns (23%), which together comprised 47% of discharges billed to Medicaid.⁴ Between 2000 and 2010, newborn discharges billed to Medicaid decreased by 4%, and pregnancy and childbirth discharges decreased by 7%.⁴

"Mother's pregnancy and delivery" and "newborn infants" were the two most expensive conditions billed to Medicaid in 2010, involving 26% of hospital charges to Medicaid, or \$54 billion.⁴

Private insurance. In 2010, 48% of all maternal childbirth-related hospital stays were billed to private insurers.⁴ The two most common conditions billed to private insurance as the primary payer in 2010 were pregnancy and childbirth (16%) and newborns (15%), which together comprised 31% of discharges billed to private insurance.⁴ Between 2000 and 2010, newborn discharges billed to private insurance decreased by 24%, and pregnancy and childbirth discharges decreased by 25%.⁴

"Mother's pregnancy and delivery" and "newborn infants" were the two most expensive conditions billed to private insurance in 2010, involving 13% of hospital charges to private insurers, or \$49 billion.⁴

* Note: The 2010 VBAC rate is based on reporting from the 33 states plus the District of Columbia that have adopted the revised (2003) birth certificate form.³ These states and territories comprise 73% of the U.S. population. Because of differences in how prior cesarean is ascertained in the 2003 birth certificate and previous versions of the birth certificate, rates should not be directly compared and differences in rates across years do not constitute a statistical trend.

References

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