

Early Prenatal Care

Definition

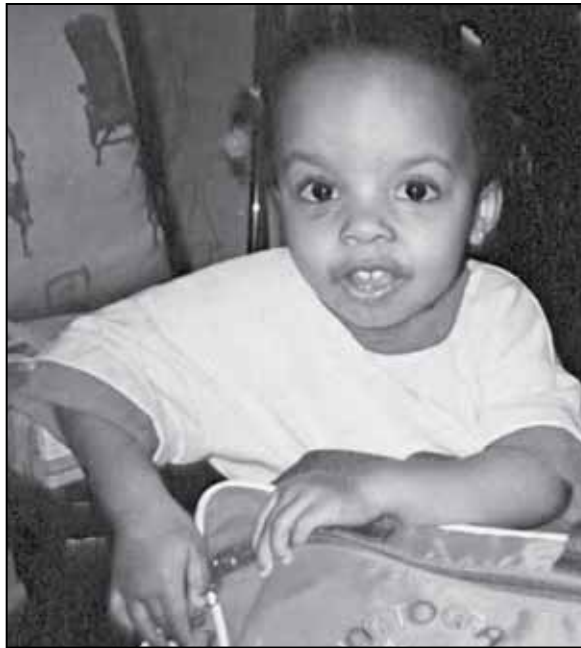
Early prenatal care is the number and percent of pregnant women who received prenatal care in the first thirteen weeks of pregnancy.

Data in context

All children need a healthy start in life, and early prenatal care services can assist pregnant women in having a healthy pregnancy and birth. Early prenatal care promotes healthy births by detecting and treating pre-existing medical conditions, such as diabetes and anemia.¹ During prenatal care visits, health professionals identify and treat potential health problems before they become serious, and also monitor the pregnancy process.²

Nationally, the number of women receiving prenatal care services early in their pregnancies is decreasing. Data from comparable states indicate that in 2004, only 83.9 percent of women in the United States began using prenatal care during the first trimester of pregnancy.³ Kentucky has generally followed national trends in the percent of women who utilized early prenatal care. In 2005, 77 percent of pregnant women received prenatal care during the first trimester of pregnancy, a decrease of 2 percentage points from 2004. The 2005 Kentucky data also show that in 23 counties, fewer than 70 percent of women received early prenatal care. Henderson, Knott, Letcher, Perry, and Union Counties were among the counties with the lowest rates of women who received early prenatal care in 2005.

Inequities in access to health care contribute to racial disparities in accessing early prenatal care. In Kentucky, White mothers had the highest rate at 80 percent, followed by Black mothers at 71



percent. Hispanic mothers had the least access to care, as only 67 percent received prenatal care in their first trimester.

Children's health begins with their mother's access to early and frequent prenatal care. For pregnant women to access these critical health services, they need adequate health care coverage and options for quality care in their community. Health care professionals and policymakers play a critical role in increasing early prenatal care by alleviating barriers to obtaining those services. Health care providers can increase the use of early prenatal care by becoming Medicaid providers for low-income mothers; becoming culturally competent in their practices; offering patient-focused care; and promoting messages about preconception health. Educating health care

professionals in culturally competent practice and the effects of classism and racism on receipt of care offers another avenue to increase prenatal care rates and decrease disparities in care. Adopting universal health coverage for pregnant women allows them to be exposed to educational materials about their pregnancy and benefit from the services provided.

Data Source: Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, processed by Kentucky Population Research at the University of Louisville Urban Studies Institute.

Data Note: Data are reported by mother's place of residence, not infant's place of birth. Births to Kentucky residents that occurred in other states are not included, because those states use the old birth certificate. For cases where the information for this variable was missing, the case was excluded from the total number of live births.

Rate Calculation: (number of women receiving prenatal care in the first 13 weeks of pregnancy in 2004 * 100) / (total number of live births in 2004)

(number of women receiving prenatal care in the first 13 weeks of pregnancy in 2005 * 100) / (total number of live births in 2005)

- 1 Child Trends. *Late to No Prenatal Care*. Available at <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org>. Accessed August 2007.
- 2 March of Dimes. *Prenatal Care*. Available at <http://www.marchofdimes.com>. Accessed August 2007.
- 3 Martin, J., Hamilton, B., Sutton, P., Ventura, S., Menacker, F., and Munson, M. (2006). "Births: Final Data for 2004." *National Vital Statistics Reports*, vol. 55, no. 1. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

Births to mothers receiving prenatal care in the 1st trimester (number & percent of all live births)

	2004		2005	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Kentucky	42,373	79	40,364	77
Adair	149	76	148	68
Allen	143	71	156	69
Anderson	195	79	184	78
Ballard	90	91	86	90
Barren	406	73	372	66
Bath	136	88	125	75
Bell	273	72	263	79
Boone	1,145	85	1,066	82
Bourbon	194	79	179	75
Boyd	410	82	405	80
Boyle	248	81	233	76
Bracken	109	90	83	78
Breathitt	131	78	125	70
Breckinridge	194	79	161	66
Bullitt	621	88	662	89
Butler	126	73	126	77
Caldwell	101	82	105	79
Calloway	261	82	340	91
Campbell	689	83	646	78
Carlisle	48	77	54	81
Carroll	116	74	103	79
Carter	233	83	267	79
Casey	138	69	114	64
Christian	999	75	558	71
Clark	374	84	336	79
Clay	223	81	215	80
Clinton	96	76	58	59
Crittenden	72	77	79	73
Cumberland	54	76	55	65
Daviess	962	74	862	69
Edmonson	95	77	86	74
Elliott	66	87	58	81
Estill	158	77	138	71
Fayette	3,044	78	2,917	76
Fleming	145	78	132	71
Floyd	386	69	373	70
Franklin	478	78	475	76
Fulton	71	79	52	71
Gallatin	111	78	95	73
Garrard	137	82	133	79

	2004		2005	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Grant	287	80	294	75
Graves	399	84	354	79
Grayson	269	80	252	78
Green	94	77	92	71
Greenup	266	81	263	82
Hancock	94	80	84	73
Hardin	1,083	73	1,104	68
Harlan	259	75	259	73
Harrison	170	77	161	76
Hart	173	71	148	61
Henderson	252	58	240	57
Henry	158	80	162	84
Hickman	38	76	28	72
Hopkins	496	84	470	78
Jackson	142	74	116	70
Jefferson	8,413	87	8,324	86
Jessamine	458	78	488	77
Johnson	210	76	235	80
Kenton	1,490	79	1,426	75
Knott	114	64	83	47
Knox	375	70	404	76
Larue	112	75	123	68
Laurel	624	85	609	82
Lawrence	124	81	130	78
Lee	64	83	51	63
Leslie	111	74	102	66
Letcher	163	51	75	26
Lewis	59	75	64	75
Lincoln	266	74	269	76
Livingston	74	81	82	77
Logan	292	79	224	79
Lyon	44	81	55	93
McCracken	710	85	657	83
McCreary	201	78	170	81
McLean	80	70	78	68
Madison	783	79	809	77
Magoffin	121	68	143	76
Marion	181	73	204	78
Marshall	287	88	269	84
Martin	110	75	94	70
Mason	168	86	124	65

	2004		2005	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Meade	146	69	200	78
Menifee	64	85	54	74
Mercer	214	76	198	77
Metcalfe	100	79	95	63
Monroe	116	73	106	73
Montgomery	290	83	270	80
Morgan	131	78	116	77
Muhlenberg	289	76	295	78
Nelson	471	81	492	86
Nicholas	85	81	69	74
Ohio	249	74	245	71
Oldham	467	84	450	86
Owen	101	81	99	72
Owsley	42	62	47	78
Pendleton	154	86	120	73
Perry	249	60	207	56
Pike	547	76	522	73
Powell	154	80	160	79
Pulaski	609	80	612	77
Robertson	13	76	24	83
Rockcastle	165	73	139	72
Rowan	189	89	211	81
Russell	171	79	146	76
Scott	474	75	498	77
Shelby	391	73	389	71
Simpson	166	81	119	68
Spencer	177	89	138	86
Taylor	200	73	215	76
Todd	145	73	95	70
Trigg	120	82	97	75
Trimble	73	79	80	82
Union	64	57	67	52
Warren	1,051	78	938	71
Washington	115	82	94	82
Wayne	193	72	185	76
Webster	131	72	100	60
Whitley	307	76	236	77
Wolfe	93	77	82	77
Woodford	216	79	210	76