

- In 1990-1992, the infant mortality rate for Tennessee was 9.9 compared to 8.9 in 1994-1996. Neonatal mortality rates were 6.1 in 1990-1992 and 5.3 in 1994-1996. Postneonatal mortality rates were 3.7 in 1990-1992 and 3.6 in 1994-1996.
- The infant mortality rate for blacks declined by 3% between 1990-1992 and 1994-1996. Their 1994-1996 rate was 17.2 per 1,000 live births. A decline of 8.6% was also observed in their neonatal mortality rate. Their neonatal mortality rate for 1994-1996 was 10.7 per 1,000 live births. Their postneonatal mortality rate was 6.5 per 1,000 live births, an increase of 3% over the 1990-1992 rate.
- In descending rank order, the three leading causes of death for infants in Tennessee in 1996 were congenital anomalies, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), and disorders relating to short gestation and unspecified low birth weight. The same causes and ranking prevailed for white infants. In the case of black infants, the causes remained the same, but the rank order was reversed.
- For the period 1994-1996, the death rate among infants from congenital anomalies was 198 per 100,000 live births. This represents a decline of 8% from 1990-1992. The rate for SIDS declined by 20% to 133 per 100,000 live births. Yet, no such downward trend is evident in the death rate for disorders relating to short gestation and unspecified low birth weight. This rate remained virtually unchanged from 1990-1992 to 1994-1996 (115 versus 114).
- The death rate for black infants attributable to congenital anomalies declined by 8% from 1990-1992 to 1994-1996 (259 per 100,000 live births). This matched the decline in the rate for the State, and marginally exceeded the decline for white infants (6%). But the decline in the SIDS rate for blacks was just 4% (to 261 per 100,000 live births) or one-seventh the rate of decline registered for white infants in Tennessee.

Chronic Disease Mortality

- The age-adjusted coronary heart disease death rate for the Tennessee population declined 7% between 1990-1992 and 1994-1996 --from 135 per 100,000 population to 126. The national target rate established under the Year 2000 Healthy People Objectives is 100 per 100,000.⁴

⁴To examine changes in mortality rates and to stabilize the data, rates for the period 1990-1992 are compared with rates for the period 1994-1996. Annual rates are available in SPOT on the HIT Web site.