



Women's Health - Trends and Updates

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Women's Health

Main Topics:

- **Heart Disease**
- **Cancer**
- **Epidemic of Sexually Transmitted Infections**
- **Mental Health and Substance Use**
- **Importance of LGBTQ health**





Women's Health - Mortality

<https://www.cdc.gov/women/lcod/index.htm>

Females, 2018, all races and origins, all ages		Non-Hispanic black Females, 2018, all races and origins, all ages		Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native Females, 2018, all races and origins, all ages		Hispanic, Female, All ages	Percent	Non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander Females, 2018, all ages	
All races and origins, Female, All ages	Percent	Non-Hispanic black, Female, All ages	Percent	Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native, Female, All ages	Percent	1) Cancer	22.0%	Non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander, Female, All ages	Percent
1) Heart disease	21.8%	1) Heart disease	23.0%	1) Cancer	17.9%	2) Heart disease	19.3%	1) Cancer	25.1%
2) Cancer	20.5%	2) Cancer	21.2%	2) Heart disease	17.1%	3) Stroke	6.5%	2) Heart disease	21.3%
3) Chronic lower respiratory diseases	6.2%	3) Stroke	6.5%	3) Unintentional injuries	8.2%	4) Alzheimer's disease	5.9%	3) Stroke	7.6%
4) Stroke	6.1%	4) Diabetes	4.5%	4) Chronic lower respiratory diseases	6.2%	5) Unintentional injuries	4.9%	4) Unintentional injuries	4.3%
5) Alzheimer's disease	6.1%	5) Alzheimer's disease	3.9%	5) Diabetes	5.6%	6) Diabetes	4.7%	5) Diabetes	4.1%
6) Unintentional injuries	4.3%	6) Unintentional injuries	3.7%	6) Chronic liver disease	5.0%	7) Chronic lower respiratory diseases	3.1%	6) Alzheimer's	3.9%
7) Diabetes	2.7%	7) Chronic lower respiratory diseases	3.6%	7) Stroke	4.5%	8-9) (tie rank) Influenza and pneumonia Kidney disease	2.2%	7) Influenza and pneumonia	3.3%
8) Influenza and pneumonia	2.2%	8) Kidney disease	3.0%	8) Alzheimer's disease	2.7%	10) Chronic liver disease	2.2%	8) Chronic lower respiratory diseases	2.8%
9) Kidney disease	1.8%	9) Septicemia	2.2%	9) Influenza and pneumonia	2.4%			9) Hypertension	2.1%
10) Septicemia	1.5%	10) Hypertension	2.0%	10) Kidney disease	2.2%			10) Kidney disease	2.1%



Women's Health – National Trends

Mortality rates, including maternal mortality, continued to increase among women of reproductive age and children, while the infant mortality rate declined. All mortality measures had distressing disparities by race/ethnicity and geography.

- **Drug deaths continued to rise** among women, **increasing 27% nationally** from 2016-2018 and 2019-2021, increased **74% in CA**. This rise in drug deaths contributed to a 17% **increase in injury deaths** among women.
- Several mental and preventive health measures worsened. **Frequent mental distress increased 16%** for women ages 18-44, from 18.1% to 21.0% from 2018-2019 to 2020-2021.
- **Depression increased 8%** for women ages 18-44, from 25.3% to 27.4% between 2018-2019 and 2020-2021.
- **10% increase in high health status** among women — the percentage of women who reported that their health was very good or excellent

<https://www.americashealthrankings.org/learn/reports/2023-health-of-women-and-children-report>



Women's Health – National Trends



- **Uninsured Women decreased 9%** from 12.9% to 11.8% among women ages 19-44 between 2019 and 2021 (decreased **11%** in CA)
- **Physical Inactivity decreased 7%** from 22.6% to 21.1% of women ages 18-44 between 2018-2019 and 2020-2021.
- **Smoking decreased 15%** from 14.3% to 12.1% of women ages 18-44 between 2018-2019 and 2020-2021.
- **Fruit and Vegetable Consumption decreased 20%** from 12.2% to 9.8% of women ages 18-44 between 2017 and 2021.
- **Number of women's health providers decreased 7%** - CA 40th among states for dedicated health care provider.



Women's Health



- Coronary Heart Disease (CAD) is the most common type of heart disease and is the #1 killer of women in the US.
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for African American and white women in the US
- Among Hispanic women, heart disease and cancer cause roughly the same number of deaths each year.
- For American Indian, Alaska Native, and Asian or Pacific Islander women, heart disease is second only to cancer.
- Women are also 15 percent more likely than men to die of a heart attack, and twice as likely to have a second heart attack in the six years following the first.



Women's Health -



WHY?? Know the Signs, and Act Immediately

- A woman suffers a heart attack every 90 seconds in the United States. If you think you or someone you know is having a heart attack, **call 9-1-1 immediately**. By acting quickly, treatment can prevent permanent damage to your heart muscle and perhaps save your life. Treatment works best if within one hour of when symptoms begin.
- **Common heart attack symptoms in women are:**
 - Unusually heavy pressure on the chest
 - Severe shortness of breath
 - Unusual or unexplained fatigue (tired, exhausted)
 - Unexplained nausea (feeling sick to the stomach), or vomiting
 - Sharp upper body pain in the neck, back, and jaw
 - Cold sweats (not hot flashes from menopause)
 - Unfamiliar dizziness or light-headedness
- Symptoms of heart disease may be different from person to person, even if they have the same type of ischemic heart disease. However, because many people have no symptoms, they do not know they have heart disease until they experience complications such as a heart attack or sudden cardiac arrest.



Women's Health



- Nine out of 10 women have at least one risk factor for heart disease. Risk factors include:
 - ☐ High blood pressure
 - ☐ High cholesterol
 - ☐ Diabetes
 - ☐ Smoking
 - ☐ A family history of premature heart disease
- Roughly 49%, or nearly 1 in 2 African American women over age 20, experience some type of heart disease, such as:
 - ☐ Clogged arteries in the heart, arms, or legs
 - ☐ Stroke
 - ☐ High blood pressure
 - ☐ Angina (chest pain)



Women's Health



- Other important risk factors for heart disease are:
 - ☐ Unhealthy lifestyle and diet
 - ☐ Being overweight or obese
 - ☐ Being physically inactive
 - ☐ Having a history of preeclampsia during pregnancy
 - ☐ Age (55 or older for women)
- Women who have gone through early menopause, either naturally or because they have had a hysterectomy, are also twice as likely to develop heart disease as women of the same age who have not yet gone through menopause.
- Family history of early heart disease is another risk factor that can't be changed.

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/Womens-Heart-Health.aspx>



Women's Health - new



Microplastics Linked to Increased Risk for Heart Attack, Stroke, Study Finds

- Microplastics and nanoplastics — microscopic bits of plastic cast off into the environment — have been found everywhere from oceans to food to human breast milk.
- Despite growing recognition of microplastics as an environmental hazard, the health effects of these minute particles still isn't well understood.
- Now, in what is being hailed as a landmark study, researchers have identified microplastics in human arterial plaque and linked them to adverse cardiovascular outcomes, such as heart attack and stroke.
- Two major findings: 1) the identification of nanoplastics in the [atherosclerotic plaques](#); 2) the patients with atherosclerotic plaques contaminated by nanoplastics had a greater incidence of cardiovascular events as [myocardial infarction](#), stroke, or death than patients who did not have evidence of nanoplastics within the [atheroma](#) [plaque,]”
- The study was published this month (March, 2024) in [The New England Journal of Medicine](#).

<https://www.healthline.com/health-news/microplastics-linked-to-increased-risk-for-heart-attack-stroke-study-finds>



Women's Health - Cancer

[English](#)
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Breast Cancer

EARLY DETECTION SAVES LIVES

What is Breast Cancer?

Breast cancer occurs when abnormal cells form in the tissue of the breast, which can then spread to lymph nodes and other parts of the body.

Statistics

- Over 40,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year. The leading cause of cancer death among women in 2020.
- Over 30% of breast cancer cases are related to family history.
- For every 100 women, 1 will develop breast cancer in her lifetime.

Breast Cancer and Health Equity

- Black women are 40% more likely to die of breast cancer than white women.
- Hispanic women are 20% more likely to die of breast cancer than white women.
- Asian women are 10% more likely to die of breast cancer than white women.
- Native American women are 20% more likely to die of breast cancer than white women.
- Low-income women are 20% more likely to die of breast cancer than high-income women.

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/owh/>



Women's Health - Cancer



Breast Cancer

- In LA County, breast cancer was the 2nd leading cause of premature death among women in 2019
- 1 in 8 U.S. women will develop breast cancer in their lifetimes
- About 85% of breast cancer occurs in women who have NO FAMILY HISTORY
- Published studies support a link between breast cancer and environmental toxins, such as those involved in the production of plastics, cosmetics, and pesticides
- All residents in Los Angeles County, regardless of immigration status, have access to both breast cancer and cervical cancer screening often at no cost or low cost through the Department of Health Services. bit.ly/BreastCancerScreeningClinics.



Women's Health – Cancer

Health Equity – Breast Cancer

- Black women are 40% more likely to die of breast cancer than white women.
- Latinx women are more likely to be diagnosed at a later stage than white women in the U.S.
- Native Hawaiian & other Pacific Islander (NHPI) women in California have a 33% higher breast cancer mortality rate than non-Hispanic white women.
- Ashkenazi Jewish women (ancestry Eastern European, French, German, Polish) have a higher risk of breast cancer because of a higher rate of BRCA mutations.
- Black women are 2x more likely to be diagnosed with types of breast cancers that are more difficult to treat.



Women's Health – rise in cancer < 50

- Overall, cancer mortality rates have been on the decline
- Order of mortality among women all ages – lung cancer, breast cancer, colorectal cancer
- Recent trend has emerged showing an increase in overall cancer incidence among people under 50.
- Especially surprising in adults in their 20s and 30s in regards to colon cancer.
- Colorectal cancer is the second deadliest cancer among women under 50, behind breast cancer, but NOW the leading cause of cancer death in women under 50. It's a colorectal cancer more difficult to treat.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/colon-cancer-deaths-younger-men-women-report-rcna134084>

https://nihcm.org/newsletter/cancer-rates-rise-among-under-50?utm_source=NIHCM+Foundation&utm_campaign=4753afc8ad-nihcm-newsletter-february24&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-3220b1e257-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D



Women's Health – rise in cancer < 50

- According to a [new study](#) published in Sept., 2023 in BMJ Oncology, cancer rates worldwide have risen dramatically in people under the age of 50. Data from 204 countries between 1990 and 2019 showed that there were more than 3.26 million early-onset cancer cases reported in those countries in 2019, up from 1.82 million in 1990, an increase of 79.1%.
- The study defined early-onset cancer as a diagnosis that occurs between the ages of 14 and 49.
- In the U.S., the recommended age to [start colon cancer screenings](#) was recently lowered from age 50 to 45, while the [recommended age](#) for breast cancer screenings was lowered from 50 to 40.
- Lower age if family history, but only about one-third have family history



Women's Health – new issues



Role of ultra processed foods

- Ultra-processed foods, as defined using the Nova food classification system = broad range of ready to eat products, including packaged snacks, carbonated soft drinks, instant noodles, and ready-made meals.
- These products are characterized as industrial formulations primarily composed of chemically modified substances extracted from foods, along with additives to enhance taste, texture, appearance, and durability, with minimal to no inclusion of whole foods.
- Easier way – they contain things you don't find in your kitchen: high-fructose corn syrup, hydrogenated oils, hydrolysed protein, or additives such as artificial colors, flavor enhancers, emulsifiers, anti-caking agents and thickeners.



Women's Health – new issues



- A study published in *the British Medical Journal* finds people who consume high amounts of these foods have an increased risk of anxiety, depression, obesity, metabolic syndrome, certain cancers including colorectal cancer and premature death. The data come from more than 9 million people who participated in dozens of studies, which researchers analyzed as part of umbrella review.
- Mood and mental health conditions - evidence shows that adults who maintain a healthy diet have fewer depressive symptoms. For instance, a French study found adherence to a Mediterranean diet in mid-life is linked to a lower risk of depression, particularly in men. Evidence exists that healthy diets may help tamp down anxiety.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2024/03/18/1238939706/ultra-processed-food-junk-food-disease-cancer-anxiety-depression-diet>



Women's Health – LGBTQ(IA+)

- People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ) are members of every community.
- Considering a [recent survey by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation](#) (GLAAD) found that 12 percent of the population identifies as LGBTQIA+, it's more crucial than ever to understand the terminology around this growing community.
- They are diverse, come from all walks of life, and include people of all races and ethnicities, all ages, all socioeconomic statuses, and from all parts of the US
- The perspectives and needs of LGBTQ people should be routinely considered in public health efforts to improve the overall health of every person and eliminate health disparities.



Women's Health – LGBTQ(IA+)



- In addition to considering the needs of LGBTQ people in programs designed to improve the health of entire communities, there is also a need for **culturally competent medical care and prevention** services specific to this population.
- **Social inequality** is often associated with poorer health status, and sexual orientation has been associated with multiple health threats. Members of the LGBTQ community are at increased risk for a number of health threats when compared to their heterosexual peers. Differences in sexual behavior account for some of these disparities, but others are associated with social and structural inequities, such as the stigma and discrimination that LGBTQ populations experience.
- Part 1: Eating Disorders in the LGBTQIA+ Community – Impact and Stigma

February 26, 2024



Women's Health – STI

STIs have risen dramatically between 2020–2021, with more than 2.5 million cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis reported in the United States.

The 2023 *STI Federal Implementation Plan* highlights more than 200 actions that federal stakeholders will take to achieve its five goals:

- **Goal 1:** Prevent New STIs
- **Goal 2:** Improve the Health of People by Reducing Adverse Outcomes
- **Goal 3:** Accelerate Progress in STI Research, Technology, and Innovation
- **Goal 4:** Reduce STI-Related Health Disparities and Health Inequities
- **Goal 5:** Achieve Integrated, Coordinated Efforts That Address the STI Epidemic



Women's Health - STIs

- Chlamydia the most frequently reported sexually transmitted infection in Los Angeles County. Chlamydia can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) in women. Severe outcomes may include infertility in women.
- In 2022, 53,565 chlamydia cases were reported in LAC, reflecting a case rate of 583 per 100,000. Rates among females were 1.2 times greater than males (636 vs. 522 per 100,000).
- 2022-23 Women HIV/AIDs cases are 15% compared with 82% men and 3% transgender
- Be familiar with Ryan White HIV/AIDs Program – supportive as well as medical services regardless of immigration status.
- Aware of Prep – Pre exposure and PEP – emergency medications – for HIV- available free in LA County

LA Public Health Dashboard: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/Dashboard.htm>



Women's Health – Epidemic of STIs

Sexually Transmitted Infections Los Angeles County, 2022

- http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/Reports/2022_STI_Snapshot_LAC_only_03.05.24_final.pdf
- Over the past 10 years, Los Angeles County (LAC) has observed a steep rise in sexually transmitted infections (STIs) with rates increasing most for congenital syphilis (22.0-fold) followed by syphilis (2.8-fold), gonorrhea (2.2-fold), and chlamydia (1.2-fold).
- In 2022, a total of 90,051 STI cases were reported to the LAC Department of Public Health. Chlamydia accounted for more than half of the reported cases (59%), followed by gonorrhea (29%) and syphilis (11%). Fifty-five percent of all syphilis cases were early syphilis. These data do not include Long Beach and Pasadena.
- In 2022, the overall rate of newly reported early syphilis cases in LAC was 61 per 100,000 (5,561 cases). Rates among males were almost 6 times greater than females (101 vs. 17 per 100,000, respectively). However, rates in females increased nearly 7-fold from 2013 to 2022 compared with a 2-fold increase among males.
- Since 2013, reported congenital syphilis cases have increased more than 17-fold. Latinx represented more than half of all congenital syphilis birthing parents (64%) while Blacks, Whites and Other8 racial/ethnic groups represented 19%, 11% and 4% of birthing parents, respectively. Down in 2022-23, 11% decrease from 2021-22.



Women's Health – Mental Health



- Mental illnesses are among the most common health conditions faced by Californians: Nearly 1 in 7 California adults experiences a mental illness, and 1 in 26 has a serious mental illness that makes it difficult to carry out daily activities.
- Rates of serious psychological distress reported by California adolescents and adults increased between 2016 and 2019
- California's rate of suicide was below both the national rate and the Healthy People 2030 target, although rates varied within the state by gender, race/ethnicity, and county.
- Close to two-thirds of adults with a mental illness and two-thirds of adolescents with major depressive episodes did not get treatment.
- In California, females were slightly more likely than males to experience serious mental illness (SMI). Californians age 35 to 44 had the highest rate of SMI, and those 65 and over had the lowest rate.



Women's Health – Mental Health



- Behavioral health equity is the right of all individuals, regardless of race, age, ethnicity, gender, disability, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or geographical location, to access high-quality, affordable healthcare services and support.
- Advancing behavioral health equity means working to ensure that every individual has the opportunity to be as healthy as possible. With access to quality services, this involves addressing social determinants of health—such as employment and housing stability, insurance status, proximity to services, and culturally responsive care—all of which have an impact on behavioral health outcomes.
- Discrimination, individual or institutional, makes people sick. Numerous studies have documented the harmful mental and physical health effects of discrimination, including depression, stress, anxiety, hypertension, self-reported poor health, breast cancer, obesity, and substance abuse.



Women's Health – Mental Health



- Mental health issues and social isolation also increase the vulnerability of aging women.
- Mental health is a growing concern in the aging population, and older adults have [the highest suicide rate](#) of any group.
- Women over 65 reported higher rates of current depression (11%) than their male counterparts (7%) on the 2015 LACHS. This could be related to living alone and social isolation. While men and women under the age of 64 live alone at approximately the same rates (8-9%), in LA, women more likely to live alone as they age.
- According to 2017 ACS 5-year estimates, 26% of women 65 years and older reported living alone compared to only 17% of men.
- Need to cultivate social networks and community specifically for older women in LA. [Research](#). shows that public health strategies that promote continued social engagement can restore and contribute to the health and well-being of aging women, especially those living alone.
- Not speaking English can also lead to social isolation for older men and women. Asian women are the second largest growing segment of older women in LA County and are significantly more likely to report not speaking English at all or not speaking it very well.



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213-749-4261

