

LOW BIRTH WEIGHT: 1996

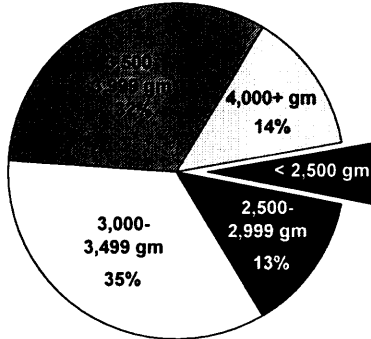
Data are from the

MAINE VITAL STATISTICS SYSTEM: 1996 (Preliminary Data)

➔ Birth weight has been found to be the primary predictor of infant survival¹. Because the incidence of low birth weight - less than 2,500 grams (5½ pounds) - remains a major public health concern, it is a Healthy Maine 2000 objective to reduce the incidence of low birth weight in Maine to 5%.

➔ In 1996, there were 13,766 live births to Maine residents. More than 800 of those births (6%) were low weight births.

Live Births by Birthweight
Maine Residents: 1996



Low Birthweight (in grams)	Number	Percent
< 500	18	2.2%
500-999	52	6.4%
1000-1499	97	12.0%
1500-1999	140	17.3%
2000-2499	502	62.1%
TOTAL < 2500	809	100.0%

➔ The receipt of early prenatal care is associated with a decreased risk for low birth weight infants². Ninety percent of Maine's new mothers received prenatal care in the first trimester; however, only 82% of unmarried mothers, 77% of mothers younger than 20, and 77% of mothers with less than 12 years education received early prenatal care - these differences are all *significantly different*.

Percent of Births by Selected Characteristics and Trimester Prenatal Care Began
Maine Residents: 1996

Trimester Prenatal Care Began	Married	Un-married	Age <20 Yrs	Age 20+ Yrs	Education <12 Yrs	Education 12+ Yrs
1st	93%	82%	77%	91%	77%	91%
2nd or 3rd	7%	17%	21%	9%	22%	9%
No Prenatal Care	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%

Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

➔ Nationally, 42% of pre-term infants (babies born at less than 37 weeks gestation) were born with low birth weights compared to 2½% for full-term and post-term infants³. In Maine, there were 1,057 pre-term infants born in 1996; 54% of them were low weight births, a *significantly greater proportion* than nationally. The proportion of low weight births for full/post-term infants in Maine, 2%, was a *significantly lower proportion* than nationally.

➔ Smoking during pregnancy increases the likelihood of low weight births³; 21% of Maine's pregnant mothers smoked during the last 3 months of their pregnancy. In Maine, women who smoked during pregnancy were almost twice as likely to deliver a low weight infant⁴.

Footnotes 1 - 4: Full citations will be provided upon request. FN 4: Maine Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System. Notes: National data are for 1995 and are for whites only. Unknowns have been excluded from all tabulations. Unless noted, differences in rates are not statistically significant, i.e., they could be accounted for by chance alone.

For further data on this topic, please contact:

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