MAINE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Fetal Mortality in Maine, 2024

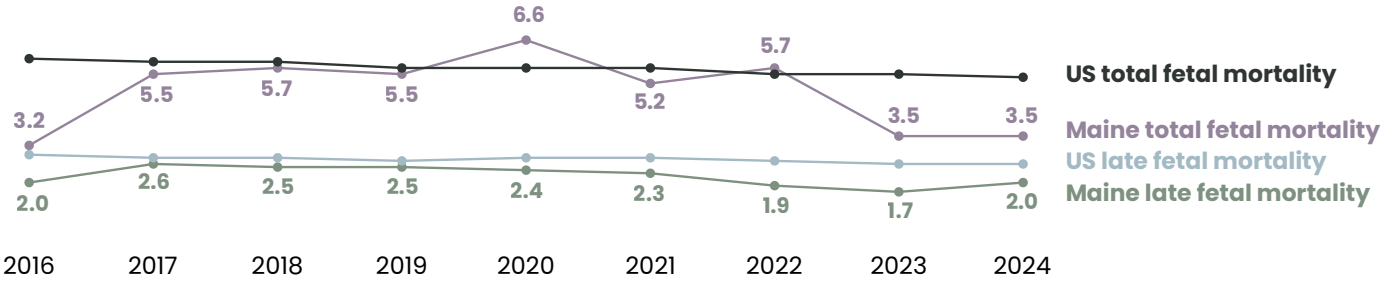
A summary of Maine's late fetal deaths

In 2024, there were **41 fetal deaths*** to Maine resident birthing parents. **23** of these were **late fetal deaths** (deaths occurring ≥28 weeks gestation).

Fetal Mortality Trend

In 2024, the **total** fetal mortality rate (≥20 weeks gestation) in Maine was **3.5 resident deaths per 1,000 live resident births + fetal deaths** (n=41).

In 2024, the **late** fetal mortality rate (≥28 weeks gestation) in Maine was **2.0 resident deaths per 1,000 live resident births + fetal deaths ≥28 weeks** (n=23).



Cause of Death

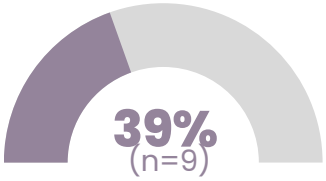
In 2024, the most common causes of late fetal death in Maine were **unspecified cause**** and **maternal conditions unrelated to pregnancy**.***

Cause	%
Unspecified cause	**35%** (n=8)
Maternal conditions unrelated to pregnancy	**26%** (n=6)
Placental, cord, and membrane complications	**17%** (n=4)
Maternal complications of pregnancy	**9%** (n=2)
Other causes	**9%** (n=2)
Congenital malformations	**4%** (n=1)

Characteristics at Demise

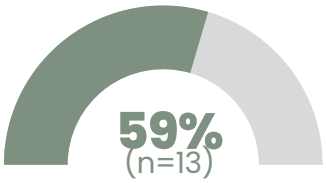
Gestational age

- About **2 in 5** (39%) late fetal deaths were **term stillbirths** (occurring at or after 37 weeks gestation).



Birthweight

- About **3 in 5** (59%) late fetal deaths occurred to fetuses of **low birthweight** (<2500 g or <5 lbs. 8 oz.).



* Fetal deaths are reported if they occur ≥20 weeks gestation. Maine's MFIMR panel only reviews late fetal deaths, or those that occur ≥28 weeks gestation

** Nationwide, a large proportion of fetal deaths are registered with an unspecified cause *(Gregory ECW, Valenzuela CP, Hoyert DL. Fetal mortality: United States, 2021. National Vital Statistics Reports; vol 72 no 8. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2023.).*

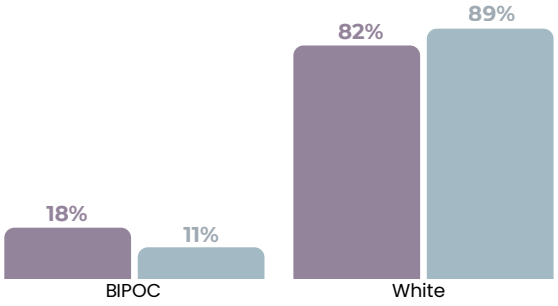
*** Maternal conditions unrelated to pregnancy could include maternal respiratory or circulatory diseases, hypertensive disorders, other systemic disorders, or localized infections.

Disparities in Late Fetal Mortality, 2020-2024

Demographic, socioeconomic, and maternal health characteristics of late fetal deaths occurring between 2020-2024 (n=122) to Maine residents.

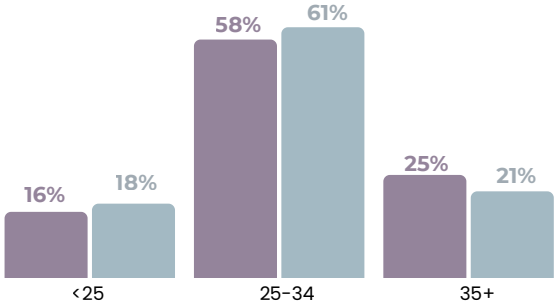
Race

18% (n=21) of **late fetal deaths** were to birthing people who are **Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)** vs. 11% of **live births**



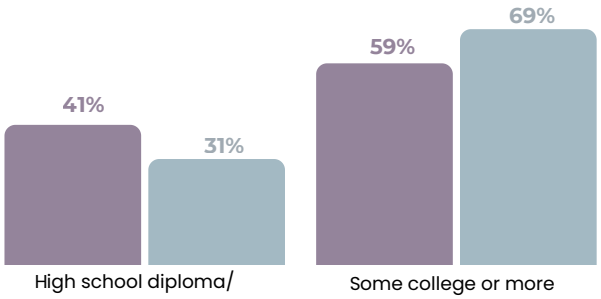
Age

25% (n=30) of **late fetal deaths** were to birthing people **aged 35+** vs. 21% of **live births**



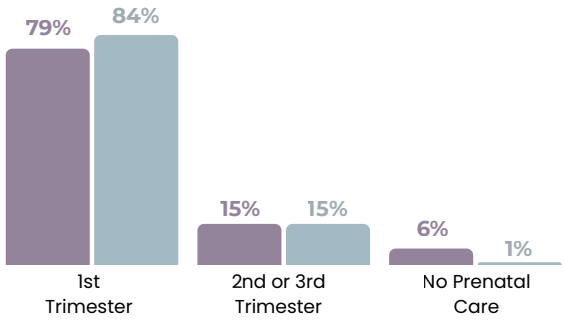
Education

41% (n=45) of **late fetal deaths** were to birthing people with a **high school diploma or less** vs. 31% of **live births**



Prenatal care

79% (n=83) of **late fetal deaths** began **prenatal care in the first trimester** vs. 84% of **live births**



Some *health conditions* were more prevalent in birthing people who experienced a **late fetal death** compared to those who experienced a **live birth**:

21% (n=26) had ≥1 *hypertensive condition** vs. **18% of live births**

19% (n=23) had *diabetes*** vs. **11% of live births**

19% (n=23) had ≥1 *previous c-section* vs. **14% of live births**

**Includes eclampsia, gestational hypertension, and pre-pregnancy (chronic) hypertension*
***Includes gestational and pre-pregnancy diabetes*

Data source: *Fetal death certificates, Maine CDC Data, Research, and Vital Statistics (DRVS).*
Fetal death certificates are collected for fetuses ≥20 weeks gestation at the time of death. This report displays data from fetal death records for fetuses ≥28 weeks gestation at the time of death (late fetal deaths).

MAINE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT FETAL MORTALITY?

The Maine Maternal, Fetal, and Infant Mortality Review (MFIMR) Panel is charged to:

- identify factors that contribute to maternal, fetal, and infant mortality
- identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current maternal/infant health care delivery system
- make recommendations to decrease the rate of maternal, fetal, and infant mortality.

For more information, visit Maine's MFIMR Panel website.