

# CDC releases first data on maternal mortality since 2007

January 31 2020

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(HealthDay)—The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

National Center for Health Statistics has released the first national data on maternal mortality since 2007. The data are presented in three National Vital Statistics Reports.

A consensus process was recommended for all states to add a standardized checkbox to improve identification of maternal death in 2003. The checkbox related to known pregnancy in defined time frames prior to death. The process of implementation started in 2003 and concluded with the addition of a checkbox to the death certificate in the last state in 2017.

According to the reports, a new method for coding maternal deaths to mitigate overreporting among [older women](#) was adopted in 2018. Based on the new method, 658 deaths were identified as maternal deaths in 2018. The maternal death rate was 17.4 deaths per 100,000 [live births](#) in 2018, with rates of 37.1, 14.7, and 11.8 among non-Hispanic black, non-Hispanic white, and Hispanic women, respectively. Use of information from the checkbox and information from cause-of-death sections of the [death certificate](#) identified 1,527 maternal deaths in 2015 and 2016 compared with 498 identified without the checkbox (ratio, 3.07). In 2015 and 2016, the [maternal mortality](#) rate would be reported as 20.9 and 21.8 deaths per 100,000 live births, respectively, with the checkbox, compared with 8.7 without adoption of the checkbox item.

The checkbox resulted in increased identification of maternal mortality, with an increase of 9.6 deaths per 100,000 live births averaging over the period of 2003 to 2017. For women aged 40 years and older, non-Hispanic black women, and certain causes of death, the average impact of checkbox adoption was greater.

**More information:** [Report 1](#)  
[Report 2](#)  
[Report 3](#)

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Citation: CDC releases first data on maternal mortality since 2007 (2020, January 31) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-01-cdc-maternal-mortality.html>

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