

Study finds preventable premature death rates to be higher in nonmetropolitan counties

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Nonmetropolitan counties had higher percentages of preventable premature deaths from the five leading causes of death during 2010 to 2022, according to [research published](#) in the May 2 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality*

Weekly Report.

Macarena C. García, Dr.P.H., from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C., and colleagues provide estimates of preventable premature deaths for 2010 to 2022 from the five leading causes of death in nonmetropolitan and metropolitan counties.

Preventable premature deaths among persons aged younger than 80 years were calculated using mortality data for U.S. residents from the National Vital Statistics System.

The researchers found that the percentage of preventable premature deaths increased for unintentional injury and stroke, decreased for cancer and chronic lower respiratory disease, and remained unchanged for [heart disease](#) during 2010 to 2022. In all years during 2010 to 2022, the percentages of preventable premature deaths from the five leading causes of death were higher in rural counties.

During the study period, percentages of preventable premature deaths for the five leading causes of death were consistently higher in the most rural counties (noncore) than in the most urban counties (large central metropolitan and fringe metropolitan).

"Findings might help guide more focused interventions to reduce [premature death](#) from the five leading causes of death and reduce disparities by rural-urban residence and geographic region," the authors write.

More information: Macarena C. García et al, Preventable Premature Deaths from the Five Leading Causes of Death in Nonmetropolitan and Metropolitan Counties, United States, 2010–2022, *MMWR. Surveillance Summaries* (2024). [DOI: 10.15585/mmwr.ss7302a1](https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss7302a1)

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