

Health Disparities in the Medi-Cal Population

Infant Mortality



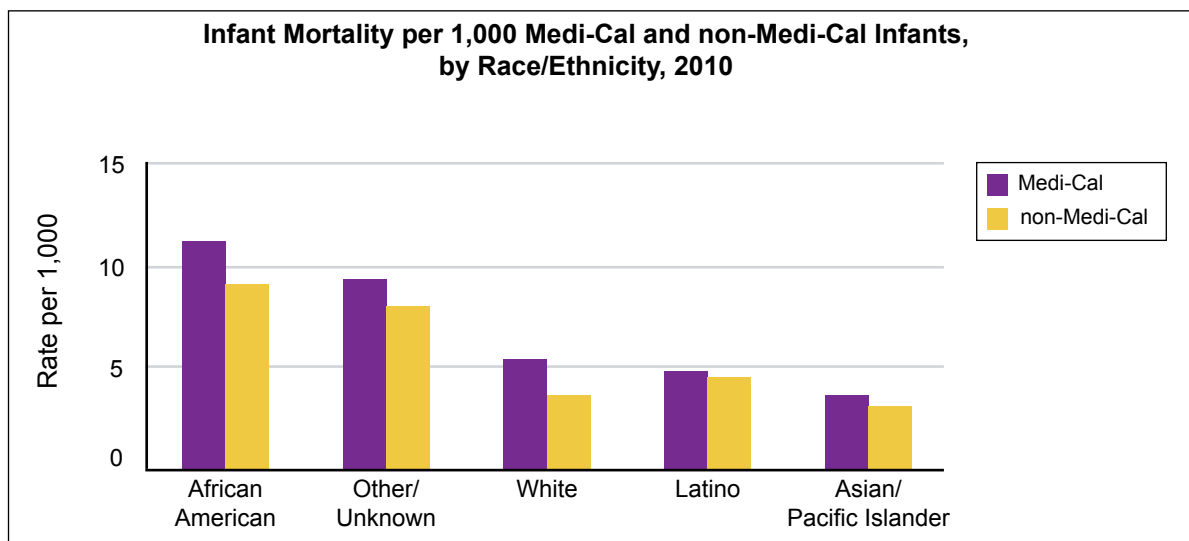
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention define infant mortality as the death of a baby before his or her first birthday. About 25,000 infants die each year in the United States, and there are significant differences by age, race, and ethnicity. African American infants have twice the infant mortality rate as White infants.¹

Of the 6 babies that die for every 1,000 births, most die as a result of serious birth defects, being born too small or early, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, maternal complications, or are victims of injuries.¹



In 2010, the infant mortality rate for the state of California was 4.7 per 1,000 births.² The infant mortality rate for Medi-Cal members in 2010 was slightly higher at 5.5 per 1,000.³ Infant mortality rates varied by race/ethnicity with African Americans and people classified as “Other” or “Unknown” having substantially higher rates as compared to Whites, Latinos, and Asians/Pacific Islanders. For all of the racial/ethnic groups, infant mortality rates were higher among Medi-Cal members as compared to the non-Medi-Cal population. The differences, however, were largest among African Americans, Other/Unknown, and Whites.

Figure



Source: Birth Cohort File, California Department of Public Health, 2010.

Note: Rates for Native Americans were not shown due to small numbers. Rates for the groups “Other” and “Unknown” as well as “Asian” and “Pacific Islander” were combined to get more reliable rates.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “Infant Mortality” <http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/MaternalInfantHealth/InfantMortality.htm>. Published October 1, 2012. Accessed February 2013.
2. California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Birth and Death Records, Vital Statistics Query System 2010; California Birth and Death Statistical Master Files 2000-2010.
3. CDPH, Birth Cohort File, 2010.

Link to Data Sources and Methods