

About 1 out of every 33 babies is born with a major birth defect.

Birth defects cause one in five deaths among infants less than a year old.

Birth defects lead to \$2.6 billion per year in hospital costs alone in the U.S.

Selected birth defects counts and birth prevalence, Michigan and US

Defects	Michigan [†]		US [‡]	
	Average annual no. of cases	Birth prevalence*	Average annual no. of cases	Birth prevalence*
Central nervous system				
Anencephalus	18	1.39	1,009	2.51
Spina bifida without anencephalus	61	4.69	1,477	3.68
Cardiovascular				
Transposition of great arteries	68	5.29	1,901	4.73
Tetralogy of Fallot	71	5.46	1,574	3.92
Atrioventricular septal defect (also known as endocardial cushion defect)	75	5.79	1,748	4.36
Hypoplastic left heart syndrome	55	4.29	975	2.43
Orofacial				
Cleft lip with and without cleft palate	135	10.47	4,209	10.47
Cleft palate without cleft lip	70	5.43	2,567	6.39
Musculoskeletal				
Upper limb defect	27	2.12	1,521	3.79
Lower limb defect	22	1.70	763	1.90
Gastroschisis	--	--	1,497	3.73
Chromosomal				
Down syndrome	167	12.96	5,132	12.78

* per 10,000 live births

† estimates based on pooled data from birth years 2002-2006

‡ estimates based on pooled data from birth years 1999-2001

-- No data available

Note: Due to variability in the methods used by state birth defects surveillance systems and differences in populations and risk factors, state prevalence estimates may not be directly comparable with national estimates or those of other states.

Preventing birth defects

- The causes of about 70% of birth defects are unknown.
- Many birth defects happen during early pregnancy, often before a woman knows she is pregnant.
- Addressing health risks and behaviors before pregnancy can reduce the risk of poor birth outcomes, including some birth defects.
- All women who could become pregnant should take 400 micrograms of folic acid every day to help prevent serious defects of the baby's brain and spinal cord.

Michigan's Birth Defect Registry (MBDR)

Michigan has been conducting surveillance of birth defects since 1992 under the authority of the Michigan law (MCL 333.5717) which established the registry as a statewide surveillance system. The registry is operated by the Division for Vital and Health Statistics within the Michigan Department of Community Health. Conditions included in the registry include congenital anomalies, chromosomal disorders, metabolic disorders, certain infectious diseases and fetal exposures. The registry relies upon the collaborative efforts of Michigan hospitals, cytogenetic laboratories, genetic counselors and others.

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How birth defects data are used in Michigan

MBDR has information on over 200,000 children born with birth defects. These data are used to provide information on the frequency and trends in birth defects and to monitor the mortality experience of these children. The data also provide the basis for research studies into the cause of birth defects. The information is also used to assist service programs in evaluating the availability of services to families of children with birth defects.