

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 \$2.5 billion per year in hospital costs alone in the U.S.

Selected birth defects counts and birth prevalence, Indiana and US

Defects	Indiana [†]		US [‡]	
	Annual no. of cases	Birth prevalence*	Annual no. of cases	Birth prevalence*
Central nervous system				
Anencephalus	4	0.42	1,009	2.51
Spina bifida without anencephalus	34	3.95	1,477	3.68
Cardiovascular				
Transposition of great arteries	40	4.61	1,901	4.73
Tetralogy of Fallot	28	3.22	1,574	3.92
Atrioventricular septal defect (also known as endocardial cushion defect)	37	4.22	1,748	4.36
Hypoplastic left heart syndrome	17	2.00	975	2.43
Orofacial				
Cleft lip with and without cleft palate	77	8.90	4,209	10.47
Cleft palate without cleft lip	55	6.37	2,567	6.39
Musculoskeletal				
Upper limb defect	19	2.19	1,521	3.79
Lower limb defect	9	1.07	763	1.90
Gastroschisis	25	2.84	1,497	3.73
Chromosomal				
Down syndrome	93	10.75	5,132	12.78

* per 10,000 live births

[†] estimates based on pooled data from birth years 2003-2005

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

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.

Indiana's Birth Defect Surveillance System

The Indiana Birth Defects and Problems Registry (IBDPR) is a population-based surveillance system that seeks to promote fetal, infant, and child health. The purpose of the Registry is to prevent birth defects and childhood developmental disabilities and to enhance the quality of life of affected Indiana residents. The 1986 Indiana General Assembly enacted a law to establish the registry. In 2001, the law was amended to allow additional data sources to be used to improve the quality of the data. IBDPR data is currently available for children born beginning in 2003.

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How birth defects data are used in Indiana

Data from the Indiana Birth Problems Registry is used to detect trends in birth defects and suggest areas for further study; to identify epidemiological factors associated with birth defects; to address community concerns about the environmental effects on birth outcomes; to evaluate education, screening, and prevention programs; and to establish efficient referral systems that provide special services for the children with identified birth defects and their families.