Birth defects state profile – North Dakota

January 2009

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.

	North Dakota†		US‡	
Defects	Annual no. of cases	Birth prevalence*	Annual no. of cases	Birth prevalence*
Central nervous system				
Anencephalus	2	2.50	1,009	2.51
Spina bifida without anencephalus	5	5.76	1,477	3.68
Cardiovascular				
Transposition of great arteries	4	4.76	1,901	4.73
Tetralogy of Fallot	4	4.51	1,574	3.92
Atrioventricular septal defect (also known as endocardial cushion defect)	2	3.00	1,748	4.36
Hypoplastic left heart syndrome	3	3.50	975	2.43
Orofacial				
Cleft lip with and without cleft palate	8	10.01	4,209	10.47
Cleft palate without cleft lip	9	10.76	2,567	6.39
Musculoskeletal				
Upper limb defect	<1	0.75	1,521	3.79
Lower limb defect	<1	0.50	763	1.90
Gastroschisis	--	--	1,497	3.73
Chromosomal				
Down syndrome	6	8.01	5,132	12.78

Selected birth defects counts and birth prevalence, North Dakota and US

* per 10,000 live births

† estimates based on pooled data from birth years 2001-2005

‡ 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.

Program information:

Devaiah Muthappa Muccatira, MS
North Dakota Birth Defects Monitoring System
E-mail: dmuccatira@nd.gov

Tamara Lynn Gallup-Millner, RN, MPA
North Dakota Birth Defects Monitoring System
E-mail: tgallupmillner@nd.gov

Website: http://www.health.state.nd.us/cshs/docs/birth-defects-report.pdf

North Dakota's Birth Defect Surveillance System

The North Dakota Birth Defects Monitoring System was established in 2003 as a means of identifying and collecting information about babies born with certain birth defects in North Dakota. The North Dakota Birth Defects Monitoring program is a passive surveillance system. Data are collected and linked from three secondary data sources. Because of the low numbers of both resident births and occurrences of individual birth defects in North Dakota, rates for each birth defect are averaged over five consecutive years to improve statistical stability of the data.

How birth defects data are used in North Dakota

Data from the North Dakota Birth Defects Monitoring System is used to: 1) report incidence and prevalence of birth defects, 2) increase awareness of birth defects and identified risk factors, 3) help researchers and health-care providers learn more about preventing future problems, and 4) assure that children born with birth defects have access to needed health-care and other services.