Birth defects state profile – Connecticut January 2010

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, Connecticut and US

	Connecticut†		US‡	
Defects	Average annual no. of cases	Birth prevalence*	Average annual no. of cases	Birth prevalence*
Central nervous system				
Anencephalus	9	2.16	1,009	2.51
Spina bifida without anencephalus	4	0.96	1,477	3.68
Cardiovascular				
Transposition of great arteries	18	4.31	1,901	4.73
Tetralogy of Fallot	18	4.31	1,574	3.92
Atrioventricular septal defect (also known as endocardial cushion defect)	10	2.40	1,748	4.36
Hypoplastic left heart syndrome	5	1.20	975	2.43
Orofacial				
Cleft lip with and without cleft palate	21	5.03	4,209	10.47
Cleft palate without cleft lip	19	4.55	2,567	6.39
Musculoskeletal				
Upper limb defect	9	2.16	1,521	3.79
Lower limb defect	5	1.20	763	1.90
Gastroschisis	14	3.36	1,497	3.73
Chromosomal				
Down syndrome	53	12.70	5,132	12.78

* per 10,000 live births
† estimates based on data from birth year 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.

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Connecticut's Birth Defect Surveillance System

The Connecticut Birth Defects Registry collects information on birth defects through various sources of data, including reporting from birth hospitals across the state, vital records, and hospital discharge data. The surveillance activities will provide useful statistical information to health care professionals, researchers, and policy makers. Reporting of birth defects to the Registry is mandatory under the Connecticut State Statutes Sec. 19a-53, 19a-54 and 19a-56a.

How birth defects data are used in Connecticut

The mission of the Connecticut Birth Defects Registry is to:

1. Maintain statewide surveillance through collecting information on birth defect incidence in Connecticut;
2. Monitor trends and patterns in birth defect statistics;
3. Conduct research studies to identify risk factors for birth defects; and
4. Promote education activities for the prevention of birth defects.