

CDC: US infant outcomes worst for those born in the Delta region

26 September 2019



percent) or [low birth weight](#) (10.75 percent) and were more likely to die in their first year of life (8.17 deaths per 1,000 [live births](#)) compared with those born in Appalachia (10.75 percent, 8.87 percent, and 6.82 deaths, respectively). The corresponding numbers for the rest of the United States were 9.78 percent, 8.14 percent, and 5.67 deaths.

"This pattern suggests that additional factors influence the disparities in infant outcomes, in addition to the differences in distributions of maternal characteristics," the authors write.

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Infants born in the Delta have the worst outcomes, according to the Sept. 25 *National Vital Statistics Reports*, a publication from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Anne K. Driscoll, Ph.D., and Danielle M. Ely, Ph.D., from the National Center for Health Statistics in Hyattsville, Maryland, used the 2017 vital statistics natality file and the 2016 to 2017 linked birth/infant death data files to compare maternal characteristics of women who gave birth in Appalachia, the Delta, and the rest of the United States and their infants' outcomes.

The researchers found that across the three regions, the characteristics of women who gave [birth](#) differed. The likelihood of being teenagers, unmarried, and not having a [college degree](#) was highest for women in the Delta, followed by women in Appalachia and then women in the rest of the United States. Overall and within most categories of maternal characteristics, infants born in the Delta were more likely to be preterm (12.37

APA citation: CDC: US infant outcomes worst for those born in the Delta region (2019, September 26) retrieved 22 August 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-09-cdc-infant-outcomes-worst-born.html>

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