Florida Mortality Atlas 2009

The Florida Mortality Atlas provides a visual display of leading causes of death in Florida. Causes of death are presented for the total population and then for Whites, Blacks and Hispanics. Trend graphs and maps display information about causes of death over time and by county. Trend graphs illustrate differences in statewide death rates for total, Whites, Blacks and Hispanics. Maps are color coded to show which areas of the state have highest and lowest rates of the selected cause of death. The color-coded maps provide a relative ranking among counties with the darkest color representing the highest age-adjusted death rates and the lightest color representing the lowest age-adjusted death rates.

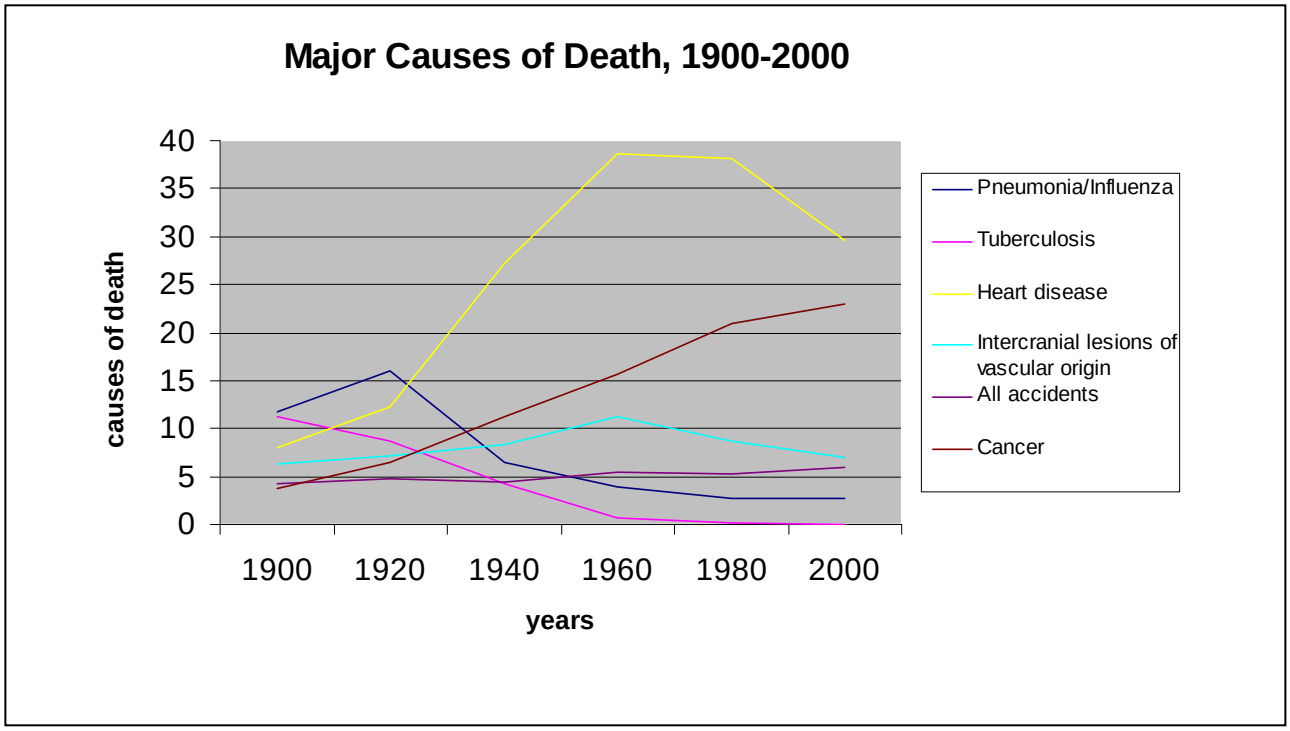
Since the occurrence of many health conditions is related to age, the most common adjustment for public health data is age-adjustment. The Florida Mortality Atlas uses age-adjusted mortality rates so that differences in the age composition are removed, allowing for comparisons independent of age structure. The Florida Mortality Atlas has been age adjusted using the US 2000 Standard Population.

The sources of data for the Florida Mortality Atlas are the Florida Department of Health's Office of Vital Statistics, the US Census Bureau, and the Florida Legislature Office of Economic and Demographic Research.

Trends in Mortality

Infectious diseases were the major killers of Floridians in the early 1900s. Influenza, pneumonia, tuberculosis, syphilis and enteric infections were among the top 10 causes of death in the first third of this century and often struck down Floridians in the prime of their youth.

In the past century, chronic diseases have overtaken communicable diseases as the leading causes of death, due both to advances in the control of infectious disease and to lengthened life spans. Heart



disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and chronic respiratory disease now comprise 62.5% of all deaths in Florida, compared with less than 20% 70 years ago. Although overall life expectancy continues a long-term upward trend, gains in the United States continue to lag behind other countries such as Canada and Japan.

The overall decline in age-adjusted death rates continued from 1970 to 2009. Though the gap between death rates of Blacks and Whites is diminishing, Blacks experienced significantly higher age-adjusted death rates during the period than did Whites. Declines in death rates in the last 10 years can be largely attributed to a decrease in the rate of deaths due to heart disease. Even with the drop in rates (from 250.7 to 155 per 100,000), heart disease continues to be the leading cause of death in Florida and the United States. Cancer and stroke death rates, the second and third leading causes of Florida deaths, also greatly decreased from 193.5 to 160.7 per 100,000 and from 50.2 to 31.6 per 100,000 respectively. Since 2000, increases in age-adjusted death rates have occurred for unintentional injury, Alzheimers Disease, suicide, Nephritis, hypertension, Parkinson's Disease, and Septicemia.

The total age-specific mortality rate for children under 1 year of age has had little change, from 702.34 per 100,000 in 2000 to 701.9 per 100,000 in 2009. The age-specific rate of death caused by perinatal conditions and congenital malformations—the leading two causes of death in 2000 and 2009 for children less than 1 year of age—also remained at about the same rate over the past decade. However, unintentional injury deaths increased from 26.65 in 2000 to 55.2 per 100,000 in 2009 while sudden infant death syndrome deaths decreased from 49.85 in 2000 to 32.2 per 100,000 in 2009. Although death rates for the 1-4 age group are low when compared to other ages, in 2009, chronic lower respiratory disease was the fifth leading cause of death, replacing heart disease in 2000.

In both 2000 and 2009, unintentional injury was the leading cause of death in Florida for persons ages 1 to 44. From 1970 to 2000, the age-specific rate of death due to unintentional injuries decreased by more than 50% for children ages 1 to 4. Since 2000, the rate continues to decline for those under 25. However, it is increasing for residents, ages 25-64 and continues to be among the top five leading causes of death among those age groups. When compared to 2000 data, unintentional injuries replaced stroke as a leading cause of death for those ages 55-64.

For residents age 45 and older, heart disease is the leading cause of death, even with the decrease from 755.5 in 2000 to 487.5 in 2009. When compared to 2000 data, heart disease replaced HIV/AIDS as the fifth leading cause of death for those 25-34. Cancer is the second leading cause of death for residents age 45 and older but this rate also decreased from 574.2 in 2000 to 479.7 per 100,000 in 2009. Comparing 2000 and 2009 data for residents ages 75-84, Alzheimer's Disease replaced diabetes as a leading cause of death.