

Richard Whitley, M.S.
Administrator

Mary Guinan, M.D., PhD
State Health Officer



Contact Name: Martha Framsted, PIO
Phone Number: 775.684.4014
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NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION

NEWS RELEASE

Nevada State Health Division Releases Birth Outcomes Biennial Report

Carson City – Birth defects affect about 1 in 33 babies and are the leading cause of infant mortality in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 5,500 infants die each year because of birth defects. Infants who survive and live with birth defects are at risk for experiencing many lifelong physical, cognitive, and social challenges.

The Nevada Birth Outcomes Monitoring System (NBOMS), formerly known as the Birth Defect Registry, is a statewide system for collecting and analyzing information concerning birth defects and other adverse birth outcomes. The recently released biennial report provides information regarding a wide array of birth outcomes. In addition to three-year incidence rates per 10,000 live births, the biennial report contains information about selected birth defects, birth defect prevention, and on-line reference sites for additional information.

The data for the reports is gathered from hospital information for newborns or patients who are under seven years of age and have been diagnosed with one or more birth defects. Per Nevada Revised Statute 442.330, the information is to be collected and used only to investigate the causes of birth defects and other adverse birth outcomes; determine, evaluate, and develop strategies to prevent the occurrence of birth defects and other adverse birth outcomes; assist in the early detection of birth defect cases and; assist in ensuring the delivery of services for children identified with birth defects.

Although the causes of most birth defects are unknown, there are preventive measures which are known to reduce the risk of some birth defects. These measures promote healthy pregnancies and babies. It is important that women of child bearing age improve and maintain their health because birth defects may occur before a woman discovers she is pregnant. Additionally, it is important that women have a preconception visit with their health care provider to treat health conditions that can pose a risk in pregnancy, such as diabetes or high blood pressure. Birth defects can develop during any stage of pregnancy; however, most birth defects occur within the first three months.

The report is available on the Health Division's website, <http://health.nv.gov>, and is located in the "Recent Publications" box. There are a variety of publications located in this area of the website, including the OHSS Zone, a periodic publication containing various statistical and surveillance information of general interest. The NBOMS is part of the Office of Health Statistics and Surveillance (OHSS). Staff in the OHSS performs data analysis and reporting, surveillance, and prevention and control activities in a broad spectrum of public health areas including: communicable and chronic disease, injury, trauma, maternal and child health, vital statistics, and cancer.

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Richard Whitley, Administrator

4150 Technology Way, Suite 300 Carson City, Nevada 89706
Phone (775) 684-4200, Fax (775) 684-4211
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