

**HEALTH STATUS - Reproductive Health**

**Maternal Mortality**

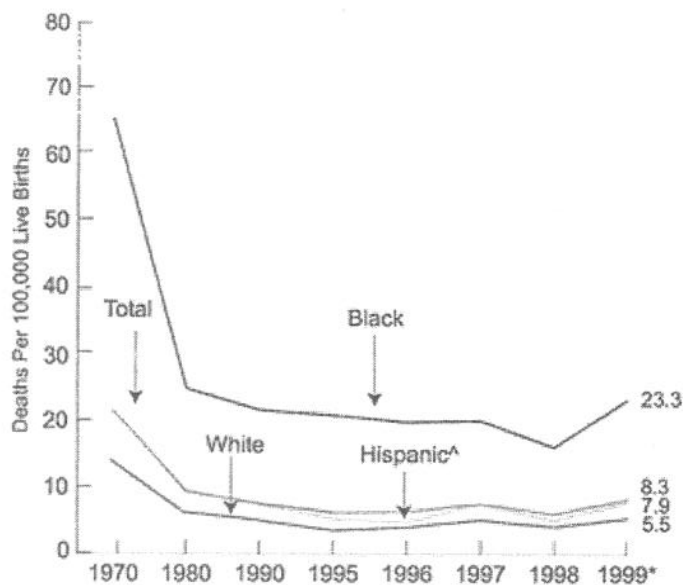
During the past several decades, there was a dramatic decrease in maternal mortality. Between 1970 and 1980, maternal mortality decreased from 21.5 to 9.4 deaths per 100,000 live births, a 56 percent drop. However, from 1980-1998, the rate remained between 6 and 7 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. In 1999, there were 391 maternal deaths related to complications of pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period, a rate of 8.3 per 100,000 live births. Though an increase from the 1998 rate of 6.1, this difference is attributable to changes made in the classification and coding of maternal deaths starting with 1999 data.

In 1999, the maternal mortality rate for Black women (23.3 per 100,000 live births) was more than four times the rate for White women (5.5 per 100,000 live births) and three times the rate for Hispanic women (7.9 per 100,000 live births).

The risk of maternal death increases with age. In 1999, women aged 35 years and older had nearly three times the risk of death (23.0 per 100,000 live births) as women aged 25-29 (8.2 per 100,000 live births). Black women aged 35 years and older had the highest rate of maternal mortality of nearly 70 deaths per 100,000 live births.

**Age-Adjusted Maternal Mortality, by Race and Hispanic Origin, Selected Years 1970-1999**

Source (11.1): National Vital Statistics System



Note: Rates are age adjusted to the 1970 distribution of live births by mother's age in the U.S.

\*Starting with 1999 data, changes have been made in the classification and coding of maternal deaths under ICD-10. The increase in the number of maternal deaths between 1998 and 1999 is due to changes associated with ICD-10.

\*Data not available prior to 1990; excludes data from States lacking an Hispanic-origin item on their death and birth certificates.