

Leading Causes of Death, by Age

Cancer was among the top four leading causes of death for all age groups except infants.

- Nearly three-quarters of deaths in Contra Costa were among residents ages 65 years and older.
- Most deaths among older residents were from chronic diseases and most deaths among younger residents were from unintentional injuries.

Between 2005–2007, almost three-quarters (73.9%) of deaths in Contra Costa were among residents ages 65 years and older. Almost one-fifth of deaths (18.3%) in the county were among residents 45–64 years old and 7.8% of deaths were among residents younger than 45 years of age.

The leading causes of death change over a person's life span. Chronic diseases such as cancer, heart disease, stroke, chronic lower respiratory disease and diabetes develop over time and eventually lead to death as people age. Chronic disease accounted for the greatest number of deaths in Contra Costa residents 55 years and older. Unintentional injury accounted for the greatest number of deaths among residents 1–34 years of age. A mix of chronic diseases and injuries made up the leading causes of death among residents 35–54 years of age. Cancer was among the top four leading causes of death for all age groups in Contra Costa, except for infants under 1 year of age.

65+ years

Between 2005–2007, there were 15,163 deaths among residents 65 years and older. This means that on average 5,054 county residents in this age group died each year. Deaths among residents 65 years of age and older accounted for almost three-quarters (73.9%) of all deaths among county residents.

Residents 65 years and older had the highest age-specific death rate (4,096.2 per 100,000); higher than the age-specific death rates of all other age groups included in this section.

Table 1 ■ Leading causes of death for residents 65 years or older

Contra Costa County, 2005–2007

	Deaths	Percent	Rate	
Heart disease	3,853	25.4%	1,040.9	This section includes age-specific rates for specific age groups (e.g., 65 years and older, etc.) These rates should not be compared to age-adjusted rates in this report or others.)
Cancer	3,559	23.5%	961.5	
Stroke	1,286	8.5%	347.4	
Chronic lower respiratory disease	972	6.4%	262.6	
Alzheimer's disease	861	5.7%	232.6	
Influenza/pneumonia	518	3.4%	139.9	
Diabetes	437	2.9%	118.1	
Essential hypertension /hypertensive renal disease	262	1.7%	70.8	
Pneumonitis due to solids and liquids	229	1.5%	61.9	
Unintentional injury	219	1.4%	59.2	
Total	15,163	100.0%	4,096.4	The injury, homicide and suicide rates in this section differ slightly from others in the report. See this section's table footnotes for further explanation.

Total includes deaths from all causes, including but not limited to those listed above.

These are age-specific rates per 100,000 residents 65 years and older.

Heart disease was the leading cause of death among residents 65 years and older, accounting for one-quarter (25.4%) of all deaths in this age group. Cancer, which accounted for 23.5% of deaths, ranked a close second, followed by stroke (8.5%), chronic lower respiratory disease (6.4%), Alzheimer's disease (5.7%) and other causes listed. The top 10 leading causes of death accounted for 80.4% of all deaths in this age group.

55–64 years

Between 2005–2007, there were 2,349 deaths among Contra Costa residents 55–64 years of age. This means that on average 783 county residents in this age group died each year. Deaths among residents 55–64 years old accounted for 11.5% of all deaths in the county.

The death rate for residents 55–64 years old was 675.3 per 100,000.

Table 2 ■ Leading causes of death for residents 55–64 years

Contra Costa County, 2005–2007

	Deaths	Percent	Rate
Cancer	944	40.2%	271.4
Heart disease	426	18.1%	122.5
Chronic lower respiratory disease	100	4.3%	28.7
Unintentional injury	99	4.2%	28.5
Diabetes	95	4.0%	27.3
Stroke	92	3.9%	26.4
Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	89	3.8%	25.6
Suicide	38	1.6%	10.9
Essential hypertension/hypertensive renal disease	27	1.1%	7.8
Viral hepatitis	27	1.1%	7.8
Total	2,349	100.0%	675.3

Total includes deaths from all causes, including but not limited to those listed above.

These are age-specific rates per 100,000 residents 55-64 years.

Cancer was the leading cause of death among residents 55–64 years old, accounting for 40.2% of all deaths in this age group. Heart disease, which accounted 18.1% of deaths, was the second leading cause of death, followed by chronic lower respiratory disease (4.3%), unintentional injury (4.2%), diabetes (4.0%) and other causes listed. The top 10 leading causes of death accounted for 82.5% of all deaths in this age group.

45–54 years

Between 2005–2007, there were 1,413 deaths among Contra Costa residents 45–54 years of age. This means that on average 471 county residents in this age group died each year. Deaths among residents 45–54 years of age accounted for 6.9% of all deaths among county residents.

The death rate for residents 45–54 years old was 297.4 per 100,000.

Table 3 ■ Leading causes of death for residents 45–54 years
Contra Costa County, 2005–2007

	Deaths	Percent	Rate
Cancer	419	29.7%	88.2
Heart Disease	265	18.8%	55.8
Unintentional Injury	159	11.3%	33.5
Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	69	4.9%	14.5
Suicide	59	4.2%	12.4
Stroke	51	3.6%	10.7
Diabetes	45	3.2%	9.5
Chronic lower respiratory disease	30	2.1%	6.3
Homicide	24	1.7%	5.1
Influenza/pneumonia	23	1.6%	4.8
Total	1,413	100.0%	297.4

Total includes deaths from all causes, including but not limited to those listed above.
These are age-specific rates per 100,000 residents 45-54 years.

Cancer was the leading cause of death among residents 45–54 years old, accounting for more than one-quarter (29.7%) of all deaths in this age group. Heart disease, which accounted for 18.8% of deaths, ranked second, followed by unintentional injury (11.3%), chronic liver disease/cirrhosis (4.9%), suicide (4.2%) and other causes listed. The top 10 leading causes of death accounted for 81.0% of all deaths in this age group.

35–44 years

Between 2005–2007, there were 699 deaths among Contra Costa residents 35–44 years of age. This means that on average 233 county residents in this age group died each year. Deaths among residents 35–44 years of age accounted for 3.4% of all deaths in the county.

The death rate for residents 35–44 years old was 150.3 per 100,000.

Table 4 ■ Leading causes of death for residents 35–44 years

Contra Costa County, 2005–2007

	Deaths	Percent	Rate
Cancer	146	20.9%	31.4
Unintentional Injury	142	20.3%	30.5
Heart Disease	93	13.3%	20.0
Homicide	53	7.6%	11.4
Suicide	50	7.2%	10.7
Stroke	29	4.1%	6.2
Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	28	4.0%	6.0
HIV disease	23	3.3%	4.9
Diabetes	13	1.9%	NA
Chronic lower respiratory disease	8	1.1%	NA
Total	699	100.0%	150.3

Total includes deaths from all causes, including but not limited to those listed above.

These are age-specific rates per 100,000 residents 35–44 years.

Cancer and unintentional injury were the leading causes of death among residents 35–44 years old, each accounting for one-fifth of all deaths in this age group (20.9% and 20.3%, respectively). These were followed by heart disease (13.3%), homicide (7.6%), suicide (7.2%) and other causes listed. The top 10 leading causes of death accounted for 83.7% of all deaths in this age group.

25–34 years

Between 2005–2007, there were 317 deaths among Contra Costa residents 25–34 years of age. This means that on average 106 county residents in this age group died each year. Deaths among residents 25–34 years of age accounted for 1.5% of all deaths in the county.

The death rate of residents 25–34 years old was 81.5 per 100,000.

Table 5 ■ Leading causes of death for residents 25–34 years

Contra Costa County, 2005–2007

	Deaths	Percent	Rate
Unintentional injury	82	25.9%	21.1
Homicide	79	24.9%	20.3
Suicide	41	12.9%	10.5
Cancer	31	9.8%	8.0
Heart disease	19	6.0%	NA
HIV disease	8	2.5%	NA
Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	6	1.9%	NA
Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	5	1.6%	NA
Total	317	100.0%	81.5

Total includes deaths from all causes, including but not limited to those listed above.

These are age-specific rates per 100,000 residents 25-34 years.

Top 10 Leading Causes with fewer than five cases not shown.

Unintentional injury was the leading cause of death among residents 25-34 years old, accounting for roughly one-quarter of all deaths in this age group (25.9%). Homicide ranked a close second, accounting for 24.9% of deaths, followed by suicide (12.9%), cancer (9.8%), heart disease (6.0%) and other causes listed. The top 10 leading causes of death, which also included stroke, and influenza and pneumonia, accounted for 87.4% of all deaths in this age group.

15–24 years

Between 2005–2007, there were 313 deaths among Contra Costa residents 15–24 years of age. This means that on average 104 county residents in this age group died each year. Deaths among residents 15–24 years of age accounted for 1.5% of all deaths among county residents.

The death rate for residents 15–24 years old was 76.5 per 100,000.

Table 6 ■ Leading causes of death for residents 15–24 years

Contra Costa County, 2005–2007

	Deaths	Percent	Rate
Unintentional injury	107	34.2%	26.2
Homicide	103	32.9%	25.2
Suicide	31	9.9%	7.6
Cancer	18	5.8%	NA
Total	313	100.0%	76.5

Total includes deaths from all causes, including but not limited to those listed above.

These are age-specific rates per 100,000 residents 15–24 years.

Top 10 Leading Causes with fewer than five cases not shown.

Unintentional injury and homicide were the leading causes of death among residents ages 15–24, each accounting for 34.2% and 32.9%, respectively, of all deaths. These were followed by suicide (9.9%) and cancer (5.8%). The top 10 leading causes of death which also included pregnancy/childbirth/puerperium, congenital malformations/deformations/chromosomal abnormalities, heart disease, anemias, diabetes and other tumors¹ accounted for 87.9% of all deaths in this age group.

1–14 years

Between 2005–2007, there were 88 deaths among Contra Costa residents 1–14 years of age. This means that on average, 29 county residents in this age group died each year. Deaths among residents 1–14 years of age accounted for 0.4% of all deaths among county residents.

Residents 1–14 years old had the lowest death rate (14.7 per 100,000) of all the age groups included in this section.

Table 7 ■ Leading causes of death for residents 1–14 years
Contra Costa County, 2005–2007

	Deaths	Percent	Rate
Unintentional injury	26	29.5%	4.4
Cancer	14	15.9%	NA
Homicide	10	11.4%	NA
Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	7	8.0%	NA
Total	88	100.0%	14.7

Total includes deaths from all causes, including but not limited to those listed above.

These are age-specific rates per 100,000 residents 1-14 years.

Top 10 Leading Causes with fewer than five cases not shown.

Unintentional injuries were the leading cause of death among residents ages 1–14, accounting for 29.5% of all deaths in this age group. Cancer (15.9%) and homicide (11.4%) were the second and third leading causes of death, respectively, followed by congenital anomalies (8.0%). The top 10 leading causes of death, which also included anemias, influenza and pneumonia, heart disease, hernia, HIV and other tumors¹ accounted for 75.0% of all deaths in this age group.

<1 YEAR OLD

Between 2005–2007, there were 173 deaths among Contra Costa residents younger than 1 year old. This means that on average, 58 Contra Costa infants in this age group died each year. Deaths among residents younger than 1 year old accounted for 0.8% of all deaths among county residents.

The age-specific death rate of residents younger than 1 year was 441.4 per 100,000.

Table 8 ■ Leading causes of death for residents younger than 1 year old

Contra Costa County, 2005–2007

	Deaths	Percent	Rate
Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	31	17.9%	79.1
Disorders related to short gestation/LBW-NEC	26	15.0%	66.3
Sudden infant death syndrome	17	9.8%	NA
Newborn affected by maternal complications	9	5.2%	NA
Neonatal hemorrhage	8	4.6%	NA
Unintentional injury	7	4.0%	NA
Respiratory distress of newborn	6	3.5%	NA
Intrauterine hypoxia and birth asphyxia	5	2.9%	NA
Newborn affected by complications of placenta, cord and membranes	5	2.9%	NA
Total	173	100.0%	441.4

Total includes deaths from all causes, including but not limited to those listed above.

These are age-specific rates per 100,000 residents younger than 1 year old.

Top 10 Leading Causes with fewer than five cases not shown.

Congenital malformations, deformations and anomalies were the leading cause of death among infants in Contra Costa, accounting for 17.9% of all deaths in this age group. Disorders related to short gestation (15.0%) ranked a close second, followed by sudden infant death syndrome (9.8%), maternal complications (5.2%), neonatal hemorrhage (4.6%) and other causes listed. The top 10 leading causes of death, which also included diseases of the circulatory system, accounted for 68.2% of all deaths in this age group.

Data Sources: Leading Causes of Death, by Age

TABLES

Tables 1–8: These tables include total deaths and age-specific average annual death rates for 2005 through 2007. Mortality data from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/>, Center for Health Statistics' Death Statistical Master File, 2005-2007. Any analyses or interpretations of the data were reached by the Community Health Assessment, Planning and Evaluation (CHAPE) Unit of Contra Costa Health Services and not the CDPH. Counts fewer than five are not shown in order to protect anonymity. Rates were not calculated for any group with fewer than 20 cases due to unstable estimates.

In this section, the number of deaths for unintentional injuries, homicide and suicide include late effects. In the Injury sections of this report, late effects are not included so numbers, rates and conclusions may differ. A late effect is the residual effect (condition produced) after the acute phase of an illness or injury has terminated.

Population estimates for Contra Costa rates for 2005–2007 were provided by the Urban Strategies Council, Oakland, CA. January, 2010. Data sources used to create these estimates included: U.S. Census 2000, Neilsen Claritas 2009, Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) 2009 Projections, and California Department of Finance Population Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State 2001-2009, with 2000 Benchmark.

TEXT

1. "Other tumors" refers to the ICD10 code for in situ neoplasm, benign neoplasm and neoplasm of uncertain behavior.