

Communicable Disease Control

Chronic Hepatitis C deaths

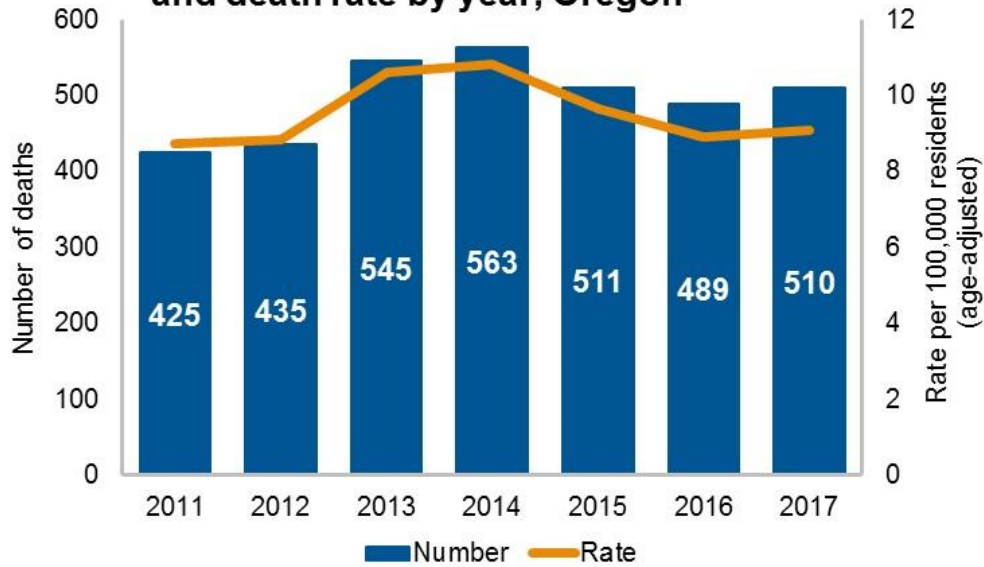
Hepatitis C virus (HCV) is the most common blood-borne pathogen in the U.S. and affects an estimated 2.7 million to 3.9 million (1.0%-1.5%) U.S. residents. It is generally accepted that 25%-30% of those infected will develop cirrhosis 20-30 years later, and 25% of persons with cirrhosis will develop end-stage liver disease or liver cancer resulting in death.

With an HCV antibody prevalence of 3.3%, persons born during 1945–1965 account for approximately three-fourths of all chronic HCV infections among adults in the United States. Although effective treatments are available to clear HCV infection from the body, most persons with HCV do not know they are infected, do not receive needed care (e.g., education, counseling, and medical monitoring), and are not evaluated for treatment. In 2012, CDC recommended one-time testing of persons born between 1945 and 1965 in addition to testing of persons with risk factors, such as injection drug use, history of dialysis, or receipt of blood transfusion or organ transplant before 1992.

In Oregon, deaths from chronic HCV have risen over the past 10 years, and the annual number of deaths has hovered around 500 in each of the last five years (2013-2017; Figure 1). According to CDC's estimates, Oregon has the third highest prevalence of HCV in the nation, and the highest mortality rate.

FIGURE 1

Chronic Hepatitis C virus: Number of deaths and death rate by year, Oregon

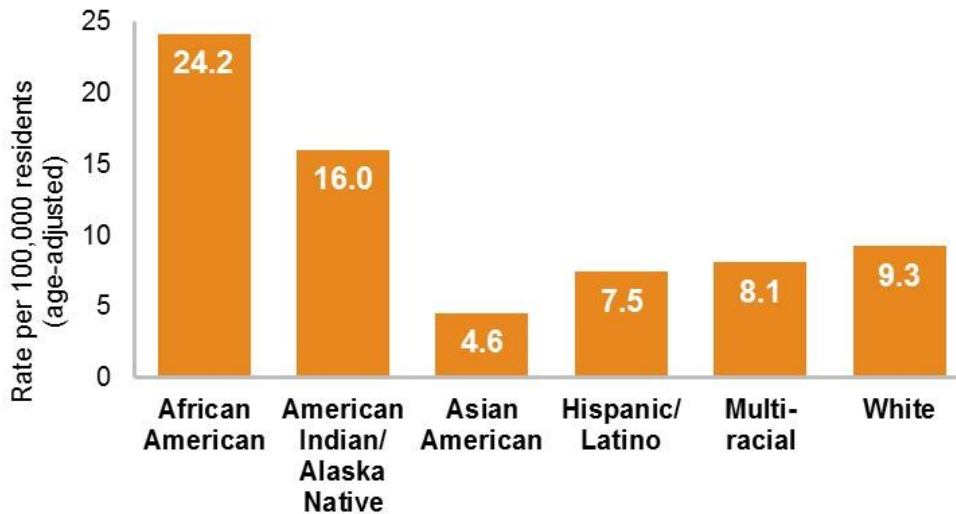


Source: Oregon Death Certificate Data

In 2017, 71% of deaths occurred in males, and 77% were between the ages of 55 and 74 years. Death rates were highest in African Americans and American Indians/Alaska Natives (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2

Chronic Hepatitis C virus: Death rate by race/ethnicity, Oregon, 2015–2017



Notes: All other groups exclude Hispanic ethnicity

Source: Oregon Death Certificate Data

To prevent and control this disease, extensive efforts are needed to increase awareness; promote harm reduction efforts in persons at risk; identify asymptomatic infected individuals who are unaware of their infection; and link HCV-infected patients to care.

Additional Resources: [Hepatitis C Factsheet](#); [Viral Hepatitis in Oregon](#)

About the Data: These data are from Vital Records Office in the Center for Health Statistics; we included all deaths in which the underlying or multiple cause of death fields contained an ICD10 code for hepatitis C.

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[Oregon State Health Profile](#)

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