

## *Communicable Disease Control*

# Chronic Hepatitis C deaths

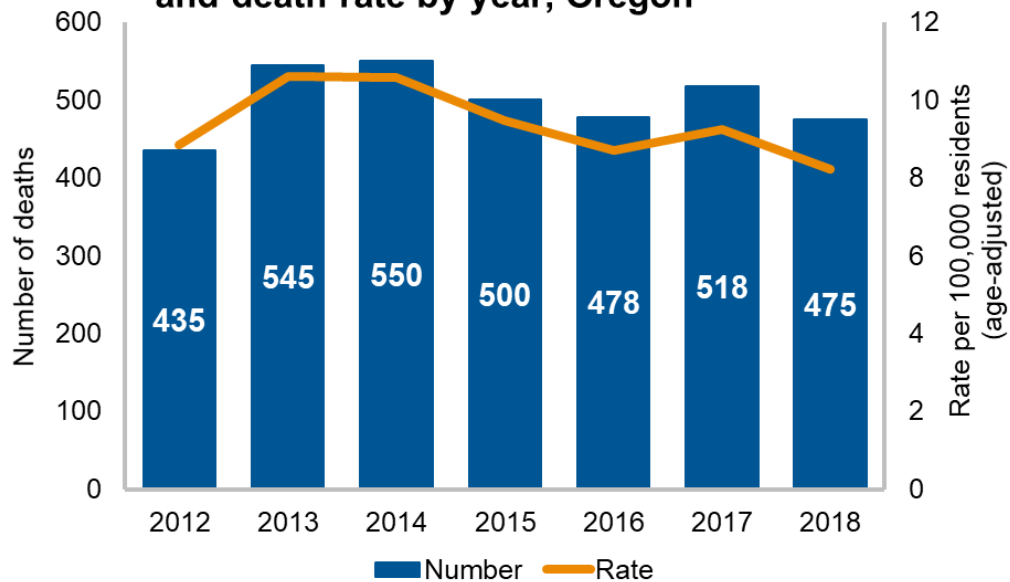
Hepatitis C virus (HCV) is the most common blood-borne pathogen in the U.S. and affects an estimated 2.7 million to 3.9 million (1.0%-1.5%) U.S. residents. It is generally accepted that 25%-30% of those infected will develop cirrhosis 20-30 years later, and 25% of persons with cirrhosis will develop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

According to CDC's estimates, in 2016 Oregon had the third highest prevalence of HCV in the nation, and the second highest mortality rate. Deaths from chronic HCV in Oregon have begun to decline since reaching a peak of 550 deaths in 2014, dropping to 478 deaths in 2018, the lowest number since 2012 (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

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

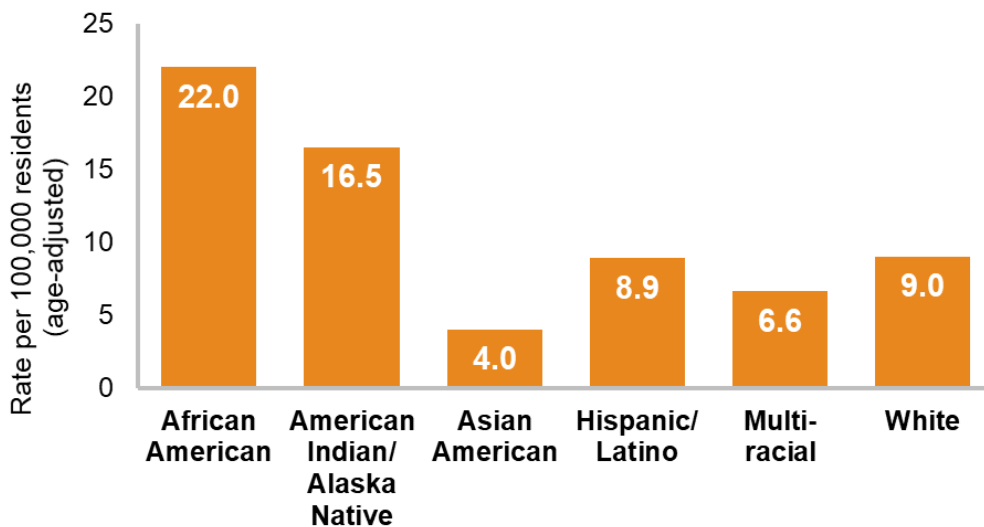


Source: Oregon Death Certificate Data

In 2018, 73% of deaths occurred in males, and 80% were between the ages of 55 and 74 years. Racial disparities persist: 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, 2016–2018



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.

**For More Information Contact:** [ohd.acdp@state.or.us](mailto:ohd.acdp@state.or.us); 971-673-1111

**Date Updated:** September 5, 2019

[Oregon State Health Profile](#)

---

*OHA 9153-D (Rev) 09/13: This document can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request this publication in another format or language, contact the Publications and Design Section at 503-378-3486, 711 for TTY, or email [dhs-oha.publicationrequest@state.or.us](mailto:dhs-oha.publicationrequest@state.or.us).*