
Appendix B: Technical Notes – Definitions

BIRTHS

Apgar Score is a numerical expression of the condition of a newborn shortly after birth. It is the sum of points accumulated upon assessment of the heart rate, respiratory effort, muscle tone, reflex irritability, and color. The highest possible score is ten. A low Apgar score (seven or less) measured five minutes after birth indicates the infant is at increased risk of morbidity and mortality.

Births to Unmarried Mothers Ratio is the number of births to unmarried mothers per 1,000 live births. Ratios differ from rates.

Crude Birth Rate is the number of live births per 1,000 total population.

Live Birth is the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a product of conception, irrespective of the duration of pregnancy, which, after such a separation, breathes or shows any other evidence of life such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles, whether or not the umbilical cord has been cut or the placenta is attached; each product of such a birth is considered live born.¹

Low Birthweight Infant is a live born infant with a birthweight less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces (2,500 grams) as reported on the birth certificate.

DEATHS

Crude Death Rate is the number of deaths per 1,000 or 100,000 total population.

Fetal Death is death prior to the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a product of conception of at least 20 weeks gestation, except where such expulsion results from a therapeutic abortion; the death is indicated by the fact that after such separation, the fetus does not breathe or show any other evidence of life such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles.

Fetal Death Ratio is the number of fetal deaths per 1,000 live births. Ratios differ from rates.

Infant Death is the death of a child prior to its first birthday.

Infant Death Rate is the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births.

Maternal Death Rate is the number of female deaths attributed to childbirth or to complications of pregnancy or the puerperium, per 100,000 live births.

Neonatal Death is the death of a child within the first 27 days of life.

Neonatal Death Rate is the number of neonatal deaths per 1,000 live births.

Postneonatal Death is the death of a child after 27 days of life and before its first birthday.

Postneonatal Death Rate is the number of postneonatal deaths per 1,000 live births.

Perinatal Death is the death of a fetus after 20 weeks gestation or the death of a live-born infant prior to the 28th day of life. Other medical literature may include different time periods.

Perinatal Death Ratio is the number of perinatal deaths per 1,000 total live births. Ratios differ from rates.

MEDICAL PERSONNEL — ABBREVIATIONS USED IN TABLES

C.N.M. — certified nurse midwife.

D.C. — doctor of chiropractic medicine.

D.O. — doctor of osteopathic medicine.

L.D.E.M. — licensed direct entry midwife.

M.D. — medical doctor.

N.D. — naturopathic doctor.

R.N. — registered nurse.

1 *Vital Statistics of the United States*, 1982, vol. 1, section 4, page 1.
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health
Service, National Center for Health Statistics, Maryland, 1986.