

LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH

The leading causes of death in Maine for adults greater than 24 years of age are the same as for the rest of the country: cardiovascular disease (including stroke), cancer, chronic lung disease and diabetes.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Maine had the fourth highest percent of people in the nation who died from these four diseases in 1997. It is estimated that three-quarters of Maine people die from these chronic illnesses, which are among the most preventable. Eating nutritious food, exercising and avoiding tobacco can prevent or control these diseases.

Among young people (15-24), the leading cause of death is unintentional injuries, the majority of which are motor vehicle crashes. Alcohol is a factor for one out of three young drivers who die or are hospitalized due to a motor vehicle crash.

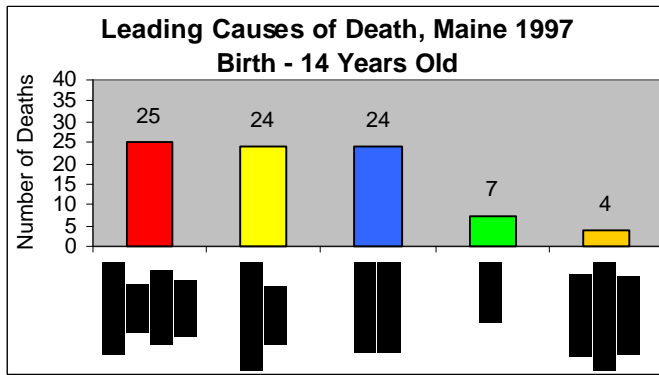
In Maine, the age-adjusted mortality rate for all cancers is significantly higher than the U.S. rate. The difference may be due to lack of access to health care, cancer screenings and appropriate treatment. There was also a significantly higher incidence rate for all types of cancers for Androscoggin County (includes Livermore/Livermore Falls of the HCC service area) compared to the state and nation. Two types of cancer are worth noting because of Maine specific issues: lung cancer and bladder cancer. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths, and approximately 90% of all lung cancer is due to smoking. However, radon increases the chance of developing lung cancer and approximately 1/3 of Maine homes have radon concentrations above the U.S. EPA level of 4 picocuries per liter of air. The age-adjusted incidence rate for lung cancer is statistically higher in Maine than in the U.S. Maine also has a statistically higher incidence rate for bladder cancer and the second highest mortality rate in the nation for this type of cancer. Exposure to arsenic and other chemicals can increase the risk. The Maine Bureau of Health estimates that more than 10% of private wells have elevated levels of arsenic. Half of the population in Maine uses well water, but only 50% have tested their water for carcinogens, such as arsenic and radon.

Sources: Mills D, Bureau of Health, Maine Dept. of Human Services. HealthyMaine 2010, Longer and Healthier Lives. Augusta, ME, 2002; Maine Cancer Registry 1997-1998.

LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH

Graph 7

Leading Causes of Death Ages 0 – 14

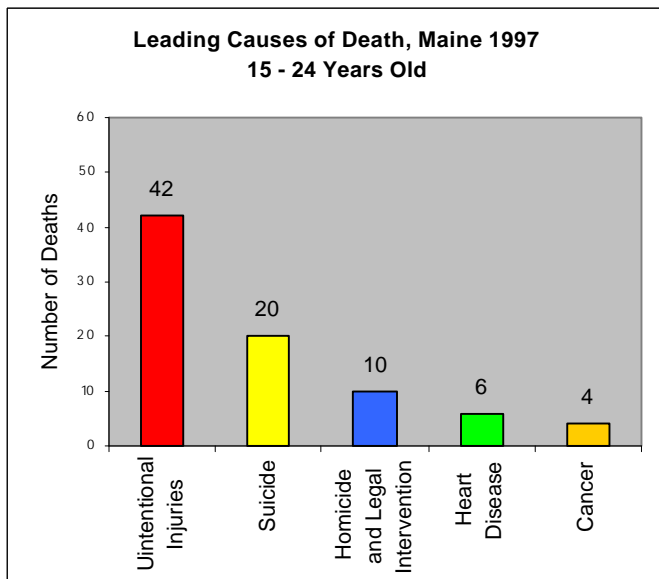


❖ Source: Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Health, Office of Health Data and Program Management

- The three leading causes of death for ages 0 – 14 are conditions of the perinatal period, unintentional injuries and congenital anomalies.
- Of unintentional injuries, snowmobile injuries increased by 70% for the age group 11-15, with a high of 41 crashes in 2002.

Graph 8

Leading Causes of Death Ages 15 - 24



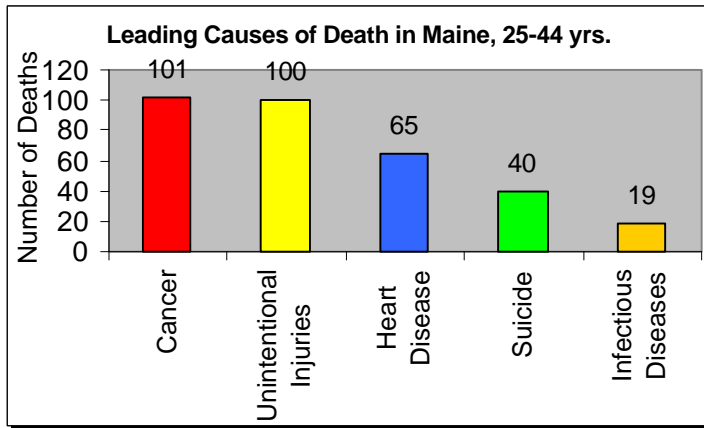
❖ Source: Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Health, Office of Health Data and Program Management

- The leading cause of death for ages 15 – 24 is unintentional injuries, the majority of which are motor vehicle crashes.
- Alcohol is a factor for one out of every three young drivers who die or are hospitalized due to a motor vehicle crash.

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Graph 9

Leading Causes of Death Ages 25 – 44

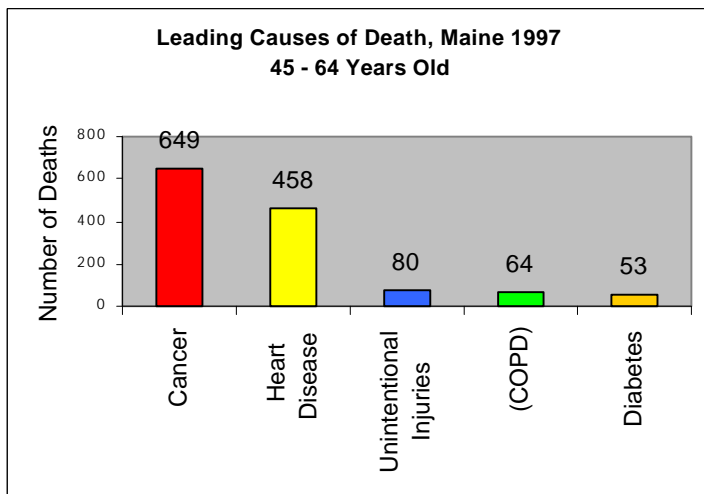


- Cancer and unintentional injuries are the leading causes of death among adults ages 25 – 44.

❖ Source: Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Health, Office of Health Data and Program Management, 1997.

Graph 10

Leading Causes of Death Ages 45 – 64



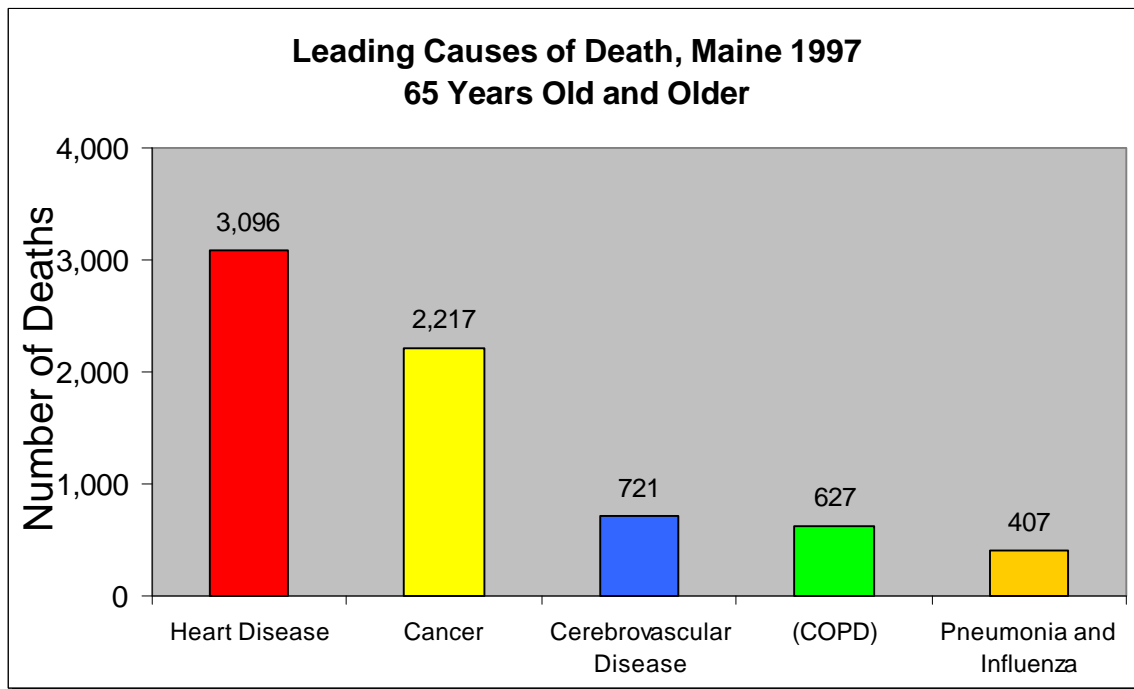
❖ Source: Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Health, Office of Health Data and Program Management

- Cancer is the leading cause of death in adults ages 45 – 64, with heart disease being the second leading cause of death in the same age group.
- The leading cause of cancer deaths is lung cancer, and 85-90% of all lung cancer is due to smoking. Radon and asbestos are other causes.

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Graph 11

Leading Causes of Death Ages 65 and Over



❖ Source: Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Health, Office of Health Data and Program Management

- Heart disease is the leading cause of death among adults ages 65 and over, with cancer being the second leading cause of death in the same age group.
- In 1999, the highest proportion of total deaths in Maine was due to heart disease, accounting for 28% of all deaths. Heart disease also accounted for the highest proportion of total hospitalizations and the greatest in estimated costs, almost one billion.