

INFANT MORBIDITY

Morbidity is a measure of disease, illness or injury within a population. Like infant mortality, conditions resulting from prematurity and low birth weight are strongly associated with infant morbidity.^{8,9} Infant morbidity can be measured by the presence of diagnosed conditions, such as respiratory distress and hyperbilirubinemia (or jaundice), as well as by service utilization indicators, including admission to a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) and length of hospital stay.¹⁰

In 2009-2010, 12.1 percent of infants in a 30-state area were reported to have been admitted to a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). A NICU is a department within the hospital that provides constant, specialized care for in-

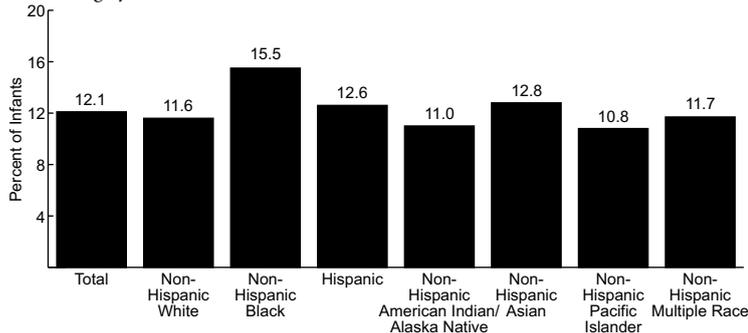
fants who are born sick, prematurely and/or at a very low birth weight. Not all hospitals have a NICU. NICU admission varied by maternal characteristics. NICU admission was lowest among infants born to mothers with 16 or more years of education (10.7 percent, compared to 12.9 percent of infants born to mothers with less than 12 years of education and approximately 12.5 percent of those born to mothers with 12 to 15 years of education; data not shown). Rates of NICU admission were highest among infants born to non-Hispanic Black mothers, with one-sixth (15.5 percent) having been admitted to the NICU, compared to 11.6 percent of infants born to non-Hispanic White mothers, 12.6 percent born to Hispanic mothers, and 12.8 percent born to non-Hispanic Asian mothers.

Asian mothers.

In 2009-2010, more than 7 percent of infants stayed in the hospital for 6 or more days. The proportion of infants with the longest hospital stays varied by maternal age, education, and race/ethnicity factors. Infants born to mothers aged 35 years and older were more likely to have a stay of this duration than those born to mothers aged 20-34 years, as were infants born to mothers with less education and infants born to non-Hispanic Black mothers. For example, 8.4 percent of infants born to mothers with 12 years of education had long hospital stays of six or more days, compared to 5.6 percent of those born to mothers with 16 or more years of education (data not shown).

NICU Admission, by Race/Ethnicity, 2009-2010*

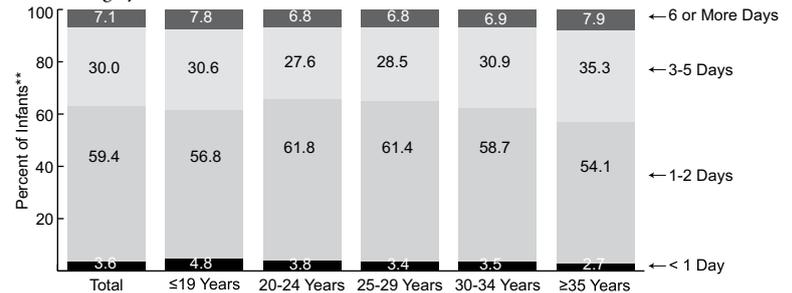
Source (I.3): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System



*Includes data from a total of 30 states and New York City; 25 states contributed both years. Mothers completed surveys between 2 and 9 months postpartum.

Hospital Length of Stay, by Maternal Age, 2009-2010*

Source (I.3): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System



*Includes data from a total of 30 states and New York City; 25 states contributed both years. Mothers completed surveys between 2 and 9 months postpartum. **Totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.