



Heart Disease and Stroke in Los Angeles County

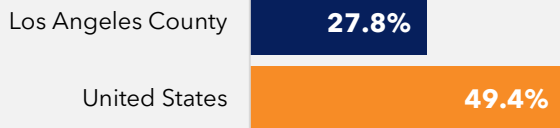
Data Trends to Inform Public Health Action: 2025 Update

Heart disease and stroke are two of the leading causes of death in Los Angeles County. Hypertension is a major risk factor for these conditions. While countywide rates of hypertension, are lower than the rest of nation, significant opportunities exist to better control blood pressure and improve outcomes among those at risk. Similarly, while recent trends in deaths from heart disease and stroke demonstrate some progress, inequities continue to exist, with Black men experiencing higher death rates than all other groups.

HYPERTENSION



In recent years, the prevalence of hypertension was lower in Los Angeles County compared to the rest of the United States.^{1,2}



Hypertension can be controlled through lifestyle change and medication. However, nearly half of adults with hypertension do not have their condition under control.^{1,3}

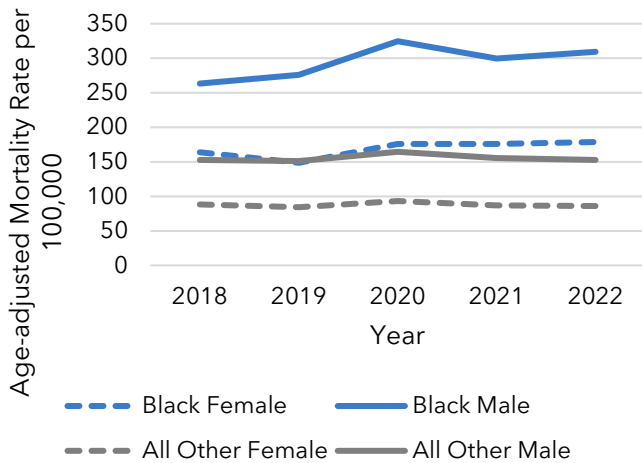


HEART DISEASE



Heart disease mortality has declined in recent years in Los Angeles County. However, among all groups, Black men have the highest heart disease rates.⁴

Heart Disease Age-Adjusted Mortality Rates per 100,000 by Year, 2018-2022

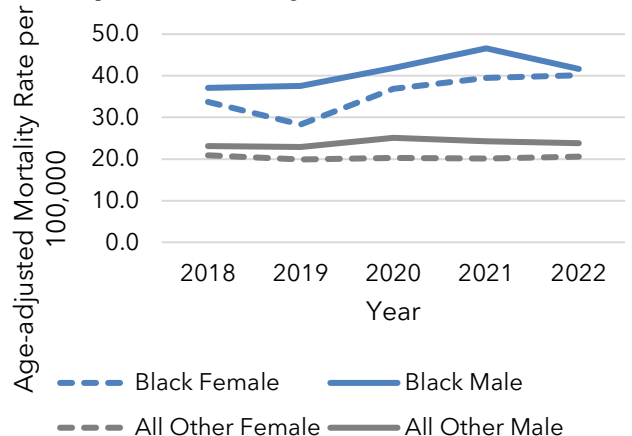


STROKE



Stroke mortality has been relatively stable between 2018 and 2022. However, Black men and Black women have higher stroke mortality rates than other racial or ethnic groups. Despite a recent decrease, overall rates for Black men have gotten worse.⁵

Stroke Age-Adjusted Mortality Rates per 100,000 by Year, 2018-2022



What's Happening in Los Angeles County to Reduce Heart Disease and Stroke?

Three major individual risk factors underlie the high rates of heart disease and stroke: smoking; poor diet and physical inactivity; and uncontrolled hypertension. These risk factors can be partially addressed by ensuring all individuals have the resources they need for optimal health, including access to healthy food; safe, walkable streets and outdoor spaces such as parks; and culturally competent, linguistically appropriate healthcare linked to evidence-based preventive practices (e.g., smoking cessation, lifestyle change, and medication management).

Improving population-level health, however, will require systemic approaches to address factors such as historic disinvestment, high stress, and barriers to care that are associated with bias, discrimination, and poverty.

PROMISING APPROACHES TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH

- Address root causes of disparities in disease burden, such as poverty and racism, and promote protective factors to strengthen community resiliency and well-being.^{6,8}
- Implement culturally and linguistically tailored approaches to ensure individuals are equipped to recognize heart attack and stroke and respond effectively (e.g., community-participatory efforts to improve awareness of disease symptoms and treatment options to reduce delays in activating EMS, skill-building around CPR delivery and other effective responses to acute symptoms, and expanding interventions like Stroke Promoter programs).⁸
- Offer training to reduce implicit bias among healthcare professionals, including first responders, to optimize the recognition, referral, and treatment of individuals at risk for heart attack or stroke, or in need of immediate care, regardless of gender, race/ethnicity, or other personal characteristics.⁸
- Advance policy and systems changes that address barriers to accessing emergency services, including cost barriers and mistrust of medical professionals and/or first responders.^{6,8}

RESOURCES



QUIT TOBACCO

LA Quits provides free and low-cost resources to help you quit smoking or vaping: laquits.com



HEALTHY EATING AND ACTIVE LIVING

Find healthy eating and active living resources across Los Angeles County:

- **Nutrition and Physical Activity Program**
publichealth.lacounty.gov/nut
- **Cardiovascular and School Health**
publichealth.lacounty.gov/cardio
- **Choose Health LA**
youtube.com/ChooseHealthLA



HYPERTENSION CONTROL

There is a lot you can do to protect your health and prevent heart disease. These resources can help you live a healthy life:

- **Numbers You Should Know for Your Heart**
youtube.com/watch?v=XbE3W8Teggg
- **The Heart Truth** nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/education-and-awareness/heart-truth
- **CDC: High Blood Pressure**
cdc.gov/high-blood-pressure/

References

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2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/hypertension.htm> Accessed January 28, 2025.
3. 2023 Los Angeles County Health Survey, Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology. Hypertension prevalence.
4. Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology. 2018-2022 coronary heart disease mortality trends among Los Angeles County resident deaths. Prepared by the Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention in January 2025.
5. Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology. 2018-2022 stroke mortality trends among Los Angeles County resident deaths. Prepared by the Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention in January 2025.
6. Clark LT. Issues in minority health: Atherosclerosis and coronary heart disease in African Americans. *Med Clin N Am*. 2005;89:977-1001.
7. Savitz ST. Literature-based appraisal of racial/ethnic cardiovascular health care disparities. *ISRN Public Health*. 2012.
8. Einstein AR, Song S, Mason M, Kandula NR, Richards C, Aggarwal NT, Prabhakaran SK. A community-partnered approach to inform culturally relevant health promotion intervention for stroke. *Health Educ Behav*. 2018;45(5):697-705.

Note: the Los Angeles County Annual Mortality and Population Data for 2018-2022 were assembled from the California Department of Public Health Vital Records Data. Compiled by the Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology in the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. The population estimates for 2020-2022 are still provisional.

Suggested Citation

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