

# Indicator: Preterm births

Singleton births at less than 37 weeks of pregnancy

## Key Findings

- Preterm births to mothers age 20 and over have remained fairly stable over the past 10 years. The percentage of preterm births to younger mothers, however, has been more variable.
- Disparities persist in the percentage of preterm births within some racial and ethnic subpopulations, especially African American and American Indian mothers.
- While there is little geographic variability in the percentage of preterm births across the county, slightly more preterm babies are born in Minneapolis and northwest Hennepin County compared to other suburban areas in the county.

## Overview

In 2014, 1,099 births, or 6.8 percent of all singleton births, in Hennepin County were babies born before 37 weeks of pregnancy, or preterm. The percentage of babies born preterm is higher for younger mothers (under age 20) than older mothers. The percentage of preterm births in Hennepin County in 2014 was slightly lower than the overall percentage for Minnesota, and was substantially lower than national rates.

Babies born before 37 weeks of pregnancy are at risk for multiple health complications. They may have been born before all of their bodily functions are fully developed, and they may have underlying health conditions. Preterm births are more common among twins and multiples. For this indicator, the statistics are limited to one-child births.

The following charts and graphs describe preterm births in Hennepin County in 2014, as well as preterm birth trends from 2005 - 2014.

## Preterm births in 2014

In 2014, 1,099 births, or 6.8 percent of all singleton births in Hennepin County, were babies born preterm. Due to changes in reporting, caution is warranted in trending data for the years prior to 2014 and 2014. See Technical Notes for additional information.

	Number of preterm births	Percentage of preterm singleton
Hennepin County preterm – singleton births	1,099	6.8%

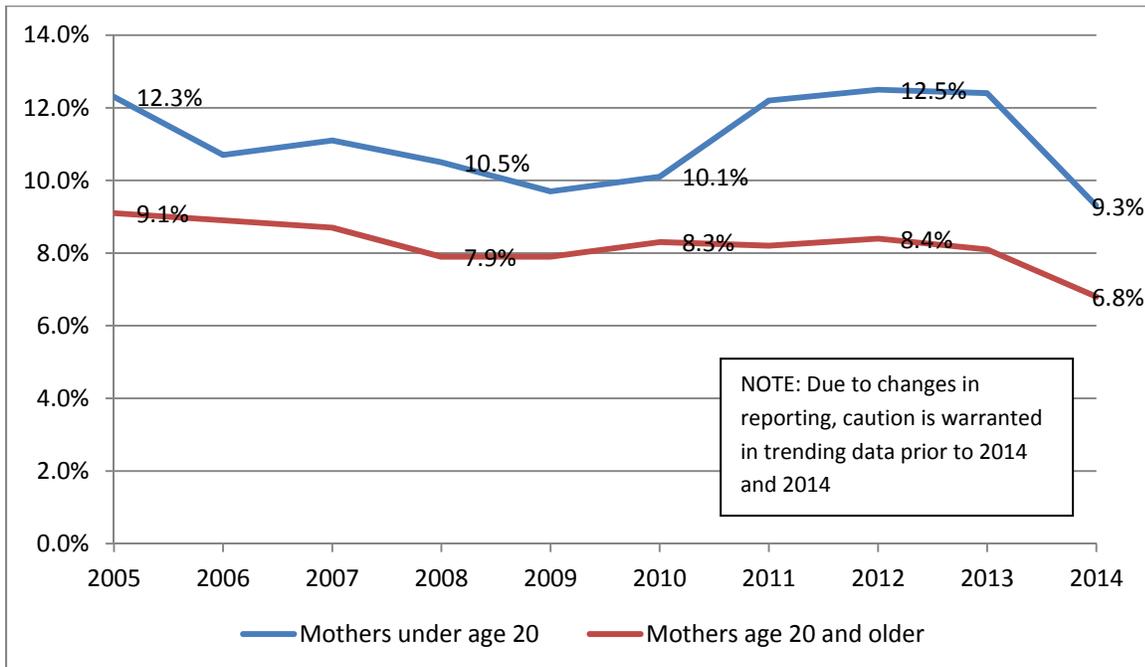


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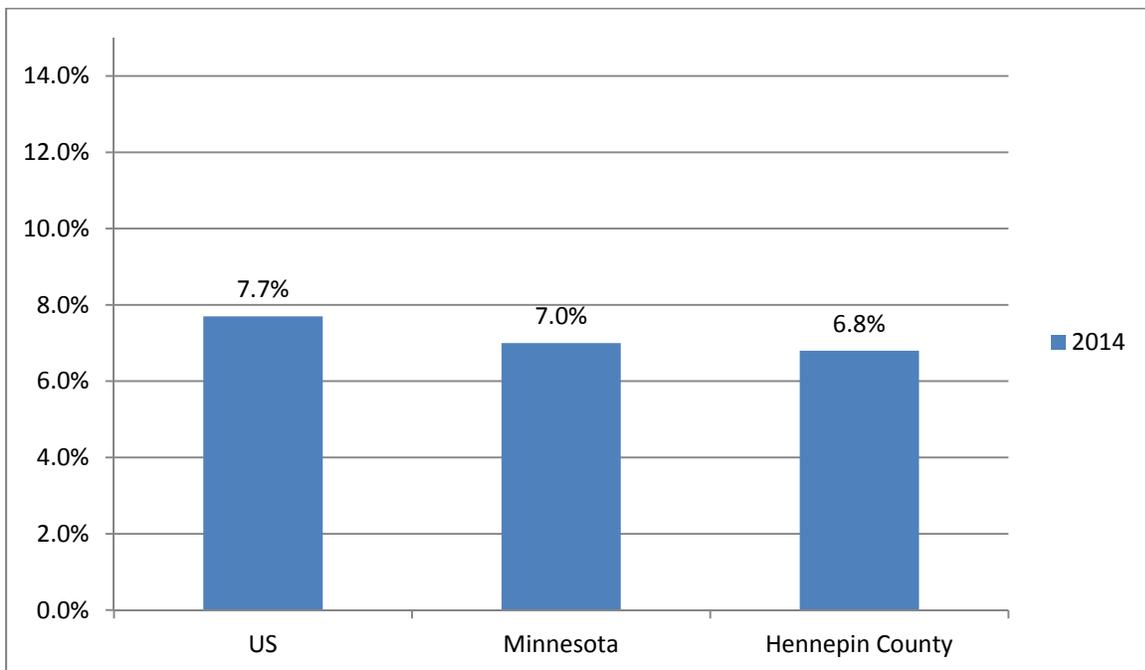
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**Figure 1. Hennepin County preterm births: 2005 – 2014\***



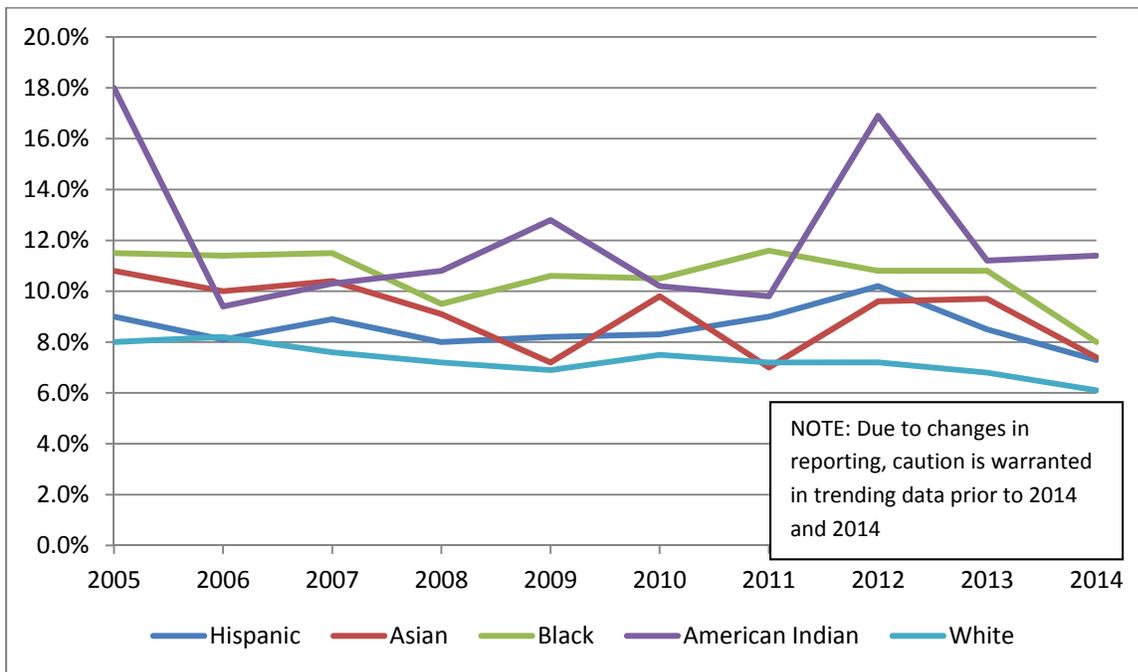
**Figure 2. Preterm births comparison: US, MN, and Hennepin County by age groups (Singleton births only)**



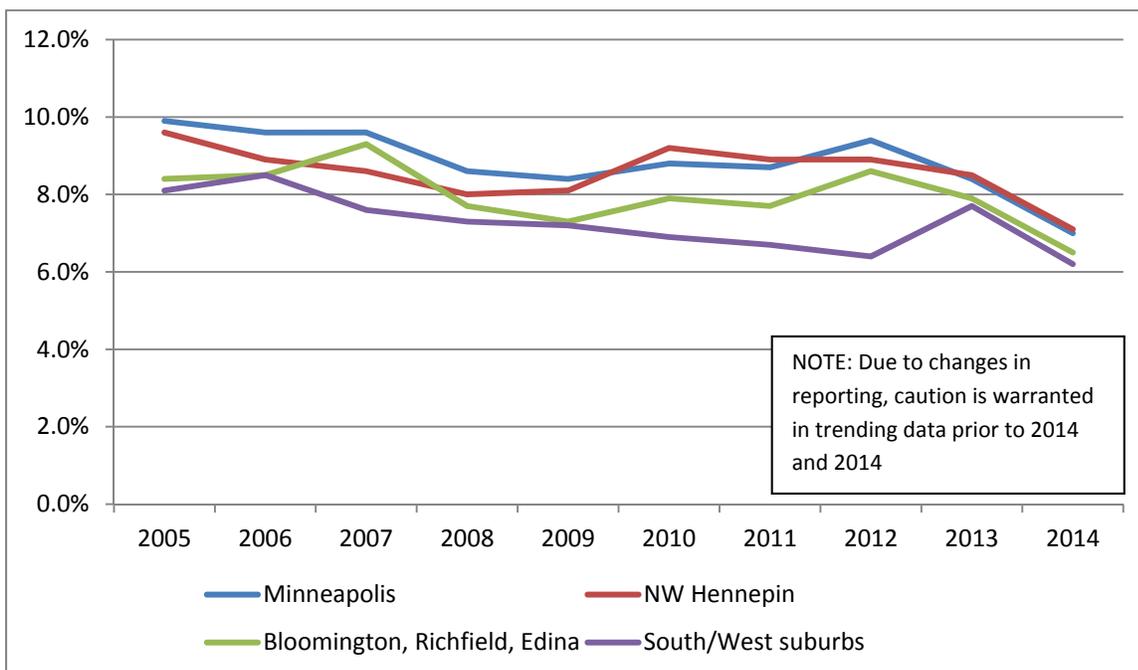
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**Figure 3. Preterm births by race/ethnicity: 2005 – 2014**



**Figure 4. Preterm births by geography: 2005 – 2014**



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### Technical notes

Population		Number of pre-term births	Percentage of pre-term singleton births
<i>Hennepin County preterm – singleton births</i>		1,099	6.8%
<b>Age</b>	Under age 20	52	9.3%
	Age 20 and over	1,047	6.8%
<b>Race/ethnicity</b> <i>Races reported a non-Hispanic</i>	Asian/Pacific Islander	128	7.4%
	Black/African American	282	8.0%
	American Indian	21	11.4%
	White	549	6.1%
	Hispanic/Latino	104	7.3%
<i>Location of residence</i>	Minneapolis	414	7.0%
	Suburban Hennepin (includes St. Anthony)	685	6.7%
	NW Hennepin County	380	7.1%
	Bloomington, Edina, Richfield	127	6.5%
	South/West Suburbs	178	6.2%

**Definition of indicator:** For this indicator, the statistics are limited to singleton births (one-child births). The percentages identify the number or proportion of singleton birth babies born prior to 37 weeks of gestation.

Beginning in 2014, Hennepin County Department of Public Health changed the way in which preterm births are identified. Consistent with the National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Hennepin County now reports preterm births based on a new standard for estimating gestational age of a newborn, the obstetric estimate of gestation at delivery. Data reported for 2013 and prior are based on a computed measure provided by the Minnesota Department of Health which includes, among other measures, last menstrual period to determine gestational age. The National Center for Health Statistics has determined the obstetric measurement to be a more conservative and reliable measure of gestational age compared to last menstrual period alone. The

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comparison cannot be made directly to the MDH-computed measure as it expands beyond last menstrual period and is a computed variable unique to MDH.

**Data source:** The number and percentages of low weight singleton births are based on data provided by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) from the annual birth certificate files. These data were geocoded by Hennepin County HSPHD to identify births to mothers residing in Hennepin County at the time the birth occurred; these will include births that occurred in other hospitals or locations outside of Hennepin County, where the mothers' address indicated that she was a resident of Hennepin County. The data reported here are from 2014, unless identified otherwise as trends or averages.

**Special notes on reporting by race/ethnicity:** The information on race and ethnicity is based on self-reported data provided by the mothers about themselves; the race/ethnicity of the child may be different from that of their mother. The mothers who identify their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino may belong to any racial group. The rates reported for Black or African American mothers combine members from both the US-born and African immigrant communities; rates would be expected to be notably different for these two sub-groups. The number of births and the overall rate reported for Hennepin County includes a small number of births to mothers whose race/ethnicity was not identified.

In 2011, multiple race selection became possible in the 2011 birth certificate, which may affect comparability to data from prior years. For further clarification in interpreting these changes, please contact Dave Johnson at [David.Johnson2@hennepin.us](mailto:David.Johnson2@hennepin.us).