

Table 7. Leading causes of death and numbers of deaths, by age: United States, 1980 and 2017

Excel version (with more data years and standard errors when available): https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/contents2018.htm#Table_007.

[Data are based on death certificates]

Age and rank order	1980		2017	
	Cause of death	Deaths	Cause of death	Deaths
Under 1 year				
Rank	All causes	45,526	All causes	22,335
1	Congenital anomalies	9,220	Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	4,580
2	Sudden infant death syndrome	5,510	Disorders related to short gestation and low birthweight	3,749
3			Newborn affected by maternal complications of pregnancy	1,432
4	Respiratory distress syndrome	4,989		
4	Disorders relating to short gestation and unspecified low birthweight	3,648	Sudden infant death syndrome	1,363
5	Newborn affected by maternal complications of pregnancy	1,572	Unintentional injuries	1,317
6	Intrauterine hypoxia and birth asphyxia	1,497	Newborn affected by complications of placenta, cord, and membranes	843
7	Unintentional injuries	1,166	Bacterial sepsis of newborn	592
8	Birth trauma	1,058	Diseases of circulatory system	449
9	Pneumonia and influenza ¹	1,012	Respiratory distress of newborn	440
10	Newborn affected by complications of placenta, cord, and membranes	985	Neonatal hemorrhage	379
1–4 years				
Rank	All causes	8,187	All causes	3,880
1	Unintentional injuries	3,313	Unintentional injuries	1,267
2	Congenital anomalies	1,026	Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	424
3	Malignant neoplasms	573	Malignant neoplasms	325
4	Diseases of heart	338	Homicide	303
5	Homicide	319	Diseases of heart	127
6	Pneumonia and influenza ¹	267	Influenza and pneumonia ¹	104
7	Meningitis	223	Cerebrovascular diseases	66
8	Meningococcal infection	110	Septicemia	48
9	Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period	84	In situ neoplasms, benign neoplasms and neoplasms of uncertain or unknown behavior	44
10	Septicemia	71	Conditions originating in perinatal period	42
5–14 years				
Rank	All causes	10,689	All causes	5,571
1	Unintentional injuries	5,224	Unintentional injuries	1,578
2	Malignant neoplasms	1,497	Malignant neoplasms	855
3	Congenital anomalies	561	Suicide	522
4	Homicide	415	Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	379
5	Diseases of heart	330	Homicide	332
6	Pneumonia and influenza ¹	194	Diseases of heart	179
7	Suicide	142	Chronic lower respiratory diseases ^{1,2}	134
8	Benign neoplasms	104	Influenza and pneumonia ¹	113
9	Cerebrovascular diseases	95	Cerebrovascular diseases	97
10	Chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases ²	85	In situ neoplasms, benign neoplasms and neoplasms of uncertain or unknown behavior	62

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	Cause of death	Deaths	Cause of death	Deaths
15–24 years				
Rank	All causes	49,027	All causes	32,025
1	Unintentional injuries	26,206	Unintentional injuries	13,441
2	Homicide	6,537	Suicide	6,252
3	Suicide	5,239	Homicide	4,905
4	Malignant neoplasms	2,683	Malignant neoplasms	1,374
5	Diseases of heart	1,223	Diseases of heart	913
6	Congenital anomalies	600	Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	355
7	Cerebrovascular diseases	418	Diabetes mellitus ³	248
8	Pneumonia and influenza ¹	348	Influenza and pneumonia ¹	190
9	Chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases ²	141	Chronic lower respiratory diseases ^{1,2}	188
10	Anemias	133	Pregnancy, childbirth and puerperium	168
25–44 years				
Rank	All causes	108,658	All causes	140,011
1	Unintentional injuries	26,722	Unintentional injuries	48,497
2	Malignant neoplasms	17,551	Suicide	15,283
3	Diseases of heart	14,513	Malignant neoplasms	14,516
4	Homicide	10,983	Diseases of heart	14,082
5	Suicide	9,855	Homicide	8,839
6	Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	4,782	Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	3,918
7	Cerebrovascular diseases	3,154	Diabetes mellitus ³	2,941
8	Diabetes mellitus	1,472	Cerebrovascular diseases	2,404
9	Pneumonia and influenza ¹	1,467	Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) disease	1,344
10	Congenital anomalies	817	Septicemia	1,246
45–64 years				
Rank	All causes	425,338	All causes	542,148
1	Diseases of heart	148,322	Malignant neoplasms	154,076
2	Malignant neoplasms	135,675	Diseases of heart	112,760
3	Cerebrovascular diseases	19,909	Unintentional injuries	47,869
4	Unintentional injuries	18,140	Chronic lower respiratory diseases ^{1,2}	22,642
5	Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	16,089	Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	22,049
6	Chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases ²	11,514	Diabetes mellitus ³	21,313
7	Diabetes mellitus	7,977	Cerebrovascular diseases	17,906
8	Suicide	7,079	Suicide	16,543
9	Pneumonia and influenza ¹	5,804	Septicemia	8,279
10	Homicide	4,019	Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis ³	7,868

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Age and rank order	1980		2017	
	Cause of death	Deaths	Cause of death	Deaths
65 years and over				
Rank	All causes	1,341,848	All causes	2,067,404
1	Diseases of heart	595,406	Diseases of heart	519,052
2	Malignant neoplasms	258,389	Malignant neoplasms	427,896
3	Cerebrovascular diseases	146,417	Chronic lower respiratory diseases ^{1,2}	136,139
4	Pneumonia and influenza ¹	45,512	Cerebrovascular diseases	125,653
5	Chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases ²	43,587	Alzheimer's disease	120,107
6	Atherosclerosis	28,081	Diabetes mellitus ³	59,020
7	Diabetes mellitus	25,216	Unintentional injuries	55,951
8	Unintentional injuries	24,844	Influenza and pneumonia ¹	46,862
9	Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis	12,968	Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis ³	41,670
10	Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	9,519	Septicemia	31,022

¹Starting with 1999 data, the rules for selecting Chronic lower respiratory diseases (CLRD) and Pneumonia as the underlying cause of death changed, resulting in an increase in the number of deaths for CLRD and a decrease in the number of deaths for Pneumonia. Therefore, trend data for these two causes of death should be interpreted with caution. For more information, see Appendix II, Table V.

²Between 1998 and 1999, the cause of death title for Chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases (COPD) in the *International Classification of Diseases, 9th revision (ICD-9)* was renamed to Chronic lower respiratory diseases (CLRD) in ICD-10.

³Starting with 2011 data, the rules for selecting Renal failure as the underlying cause of death were changed, affecting the number of deaths in the Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis and Diabetes categories. These changes directly affect deaths with mention of Renal failure and other associated conditions, such as Diabetes mellitus with renal complications. The result is a decrease in the number of deaths for Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis and an increase in the number of deaths for Diabetes mellitus. Therefore, trend data for these two causes of death should be interpreted with caution. For more information, see Technical Notes in "Deaths: Final Data for 2011," available from: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr63/nvsr63_03.pdf.

NOTE: For cause-of-death codes based on ICD-9 in 1980 and ICD-10 in 2017, see Appendix II, Cause of death; Cause-of-death ranking; Table III; Table IV.

SOURCE: NCHS, National Vital Statistics System. Vital statistics of the United States, 1980. Volume II—Mortality, part A. 1985; public-use 2017 Mortality File. Kochanek KD, Murphy SL, Xu JQ, Arias E. Deaths: Final data for 2017. National Vital Statistics Reports. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2019. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/nvsr.htm>. See Appendix I, National Vital Statistics System (NVSS).