

# Trends in Morbidity, Mortality and Behaviors in the US

To follow trends in the causes of disease and death, the two measure of incidence that are always of interest are mortality and morbidity rates.

**Mortality Rate:** The incidence of fatal cases of a disease in a population during a specific time period.

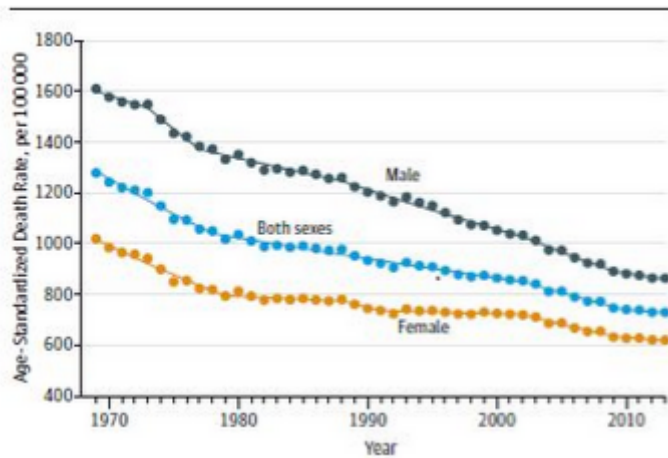
**Morbidity Rate:** The Incidence of non-fatal cases of a disease in a population during a specific time period.

## Learning Objectives

1. Define and calculate mortality and morbidity rates
2. Identify major causes of mortality and morbidity
3. Discuss gender and racial differences in overall mortality trends
4. Discuss trends in the major causes of mortality and morbidity
5. Discuss the temporal relationship among per capita cigarette consumption
6. Discuss where the US ranks among nations in regard to infant mortality rates

## Trends in Mortality

In order to adjust for differences in age distribution of the population over time researchers computed age-adjusted death rates per 100,000 population per year, finding that from 1969 to 2013 mortality rates decreased by almost 50%. Mortality rates in males were greater than females across the entire period.



One size does not fit all in the US. A breakdown of reasons for death revealed a variety of trends in different parts of the country. I.e. violence related deaths are more common on the West Coast, while heart disease related deaths are increasingly common in the Southeast. While death by heart diseases are slowly declining overall due to declining smoking rates, while in comparison the rate of COPD has been increasing since the 80's. This is because it takes many years for COPD to manifest. Heart disease is still the leading cause of death in US.

Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL) is an estimate of the average number of years a person would have lived had they not died prematurely, it is a measure of premature mortality. To calculate YPLL one must establish a reference age for the population.

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