

MORTALITY OF YOUNG ADULTS

During an average week in 2000, 56 young adults aged 20 to 44 died. The 2,933 premature deaths among 1,874, 329 young adult resident of Arizona produced a 2000 mortality rate of 156.5 per 100,000, 3.4 percent lower than the 1999 rate. However, the 2000 total mortality rate for young adults was 1.6 percent greater than their mortality rate in 1990 (**Table 2C-16**). Male but not female young adults improved their survival chances between 1990 and 2000. Compared to 1990, the female mortality rate was 10.7 percent higher while the male death rate was lower by 7 percent in 2000 (**Figure 2C-9, Table 2C-16**).

Leading causes of death

The *human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) disease* dropped from being the 5th leading cause of death among young adults in 1996 to 6th leading cause in 1997 and 7th leading cause in 1998, 1999 and 2000.

Mortality rates for all of the five leading causes of young adult deaths were lower in 2000 than they were in 1999. The death rate for *unintentional injuries* dropped to 37.7/100,000, the lowest level since 1990 (**Table 2C-16**). The *suicide* death rate declined for the second consecutive year from 24.4/100,000 in 1998 to 18.1/100,000 in 2000. The *homicide* death rate declined in 2000 to 12.5/100,000.

Gender differences

Fifty-seven percent of the 2000 deaths from *HIV disease* (89 out of 157) occurred among Arizonans 20-44 years old (**Table 2C-28**). *HIV infection* was not among the five leading causes of death for females in the 1990-2000 period. Males accounted for 71 (79.8 percent) of 89 young adult deaths from *HIV disease* in 2000.

The male death rate for *HIV disease* declined 83.9 percent from a high of 45.2/100,000 in 1995 to 7.3/100,000 in 2000. From 1989 to 1996, *HIV disease* was the third leading cause of death among male young adults in Arizona. It was the 6th leading cause of death both in 1997 and 1998. Both in 1999 and 2000, *HIV disease* was the 7th leading cause of death among males 20 to 44 years old (**Table 2C-19**).

Despite its proportional decline in total young adult mortality, violence in the three forms (*unintentional injuries in accidents, suicide* and *homicide*) claimed young adult men's lives at a rate (105.0/100,000) 3.3 times greater than the women's rate (28.4/100,000).

Urban/rural differences

The mortality disadvantage of rural compared to urban young adults slightly increased from 1990 to 2000. Rural young adults were 40.8 percent more likely to die than their urban counterparts in 2000 compared to 33.9 percent more likely in 1990. In 2000, rural compared to urban young adults were 2.1 times more likely to die from a *motor vehicle-related injury* and 1.7 times more likely to commit *suicide*. In contrast, urban compared to rural young adults were 1.4 times more likely to be murdered.

Using urban female young adults, the most advanced subgroup, as the base (**Table 2C-18**), in 2000 for every death per 100,000 urban females there were 1.5 deaths per 100,000 rural female young adults, 2.2 deaths per 100,000 urban male young adults and 3.4 deaths per 100,000 rural male young adults.