



**2D.**

### **PATTERNS OF PREMATURE MORTALITY**

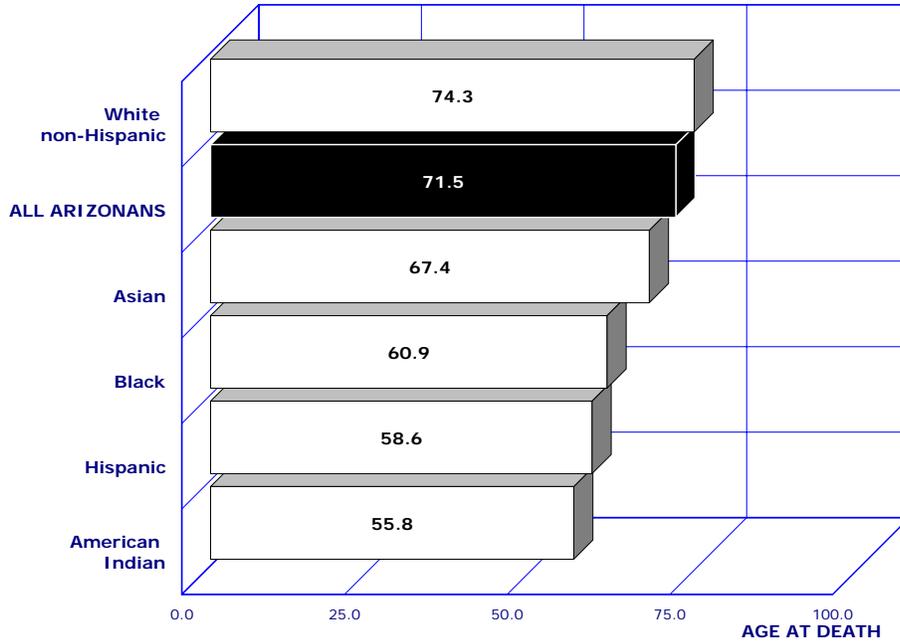
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The average age of Arizonans who died in 2002 was 71.5 years, with males below the mean at 68.1 years and females above the mean at 75.3 years (**Table 2D-1**). From 1992 to 2002, females gained an average of 2.9 years, while males gained 2.3 years.

The differences in average age at death between Arizona counties ranged in 2002 from a low of 61.6 years in Apache County, to a high of 74.6 years in Yavapai County (**Table 5E-11**). The results on average age at death in **Table 5E-11** strongly indicate that a higher proportion of deaths among residents of Apache, Coconino, Navajo, Pinal and La Paz counties occur before the expected years of life reached based on the national estimates of life expectancy. This proportion is termed the premature mortality percent. **Table 2D-2** gives the annual premature mortality percents by ethnic and gender groups from 1992 to 2002. The data in **Table 2D-4** exemplify the differences in the proportion of premature deaths by cause of death, urban and rural area, gender, and race/ethnicity.

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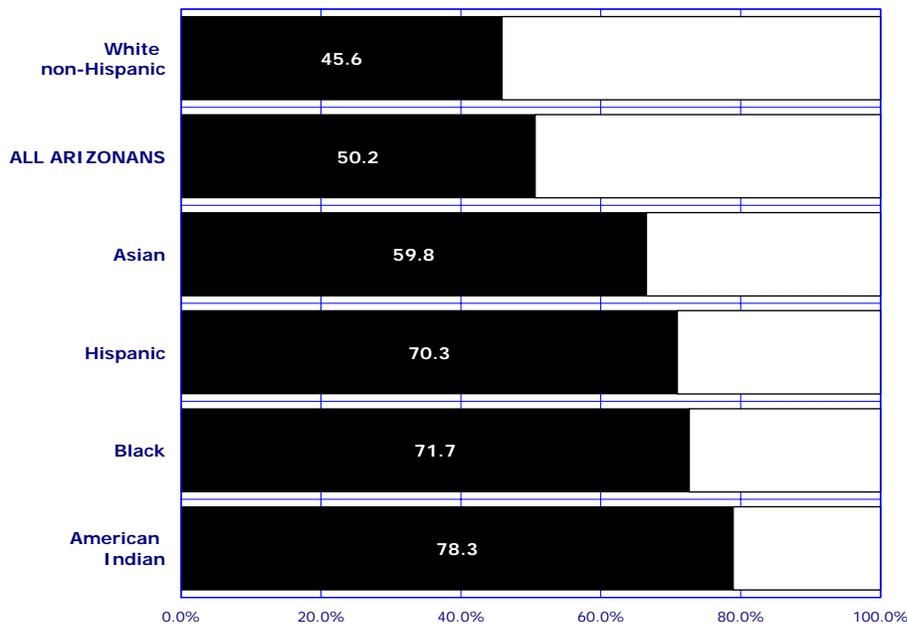
**Figure 2D-1**  
Average Age At Death by Race/Ethnicity,  
Arizona, 2002



Neither the average age at death nor its increase over time was demonstrated in the four ethnic minority groups. In contrast, White non-Hispanics, the largest ethnic group, had an average age at death exceeding the overall average.

White non-Hispanics during 2002 died at an average age that exceeded the average age of death of Asians by 6.9 years, Blacks by 13.4 years, Hispanics by 15.7 years and American Indians by 18.5 years (Figure 2D-1, Table 2D-1).

**Figure 2D-2**  
Percent of Deaths Before Expected Years of Life  
Reached\* by Race/Ethnicity, Arizona, 2002

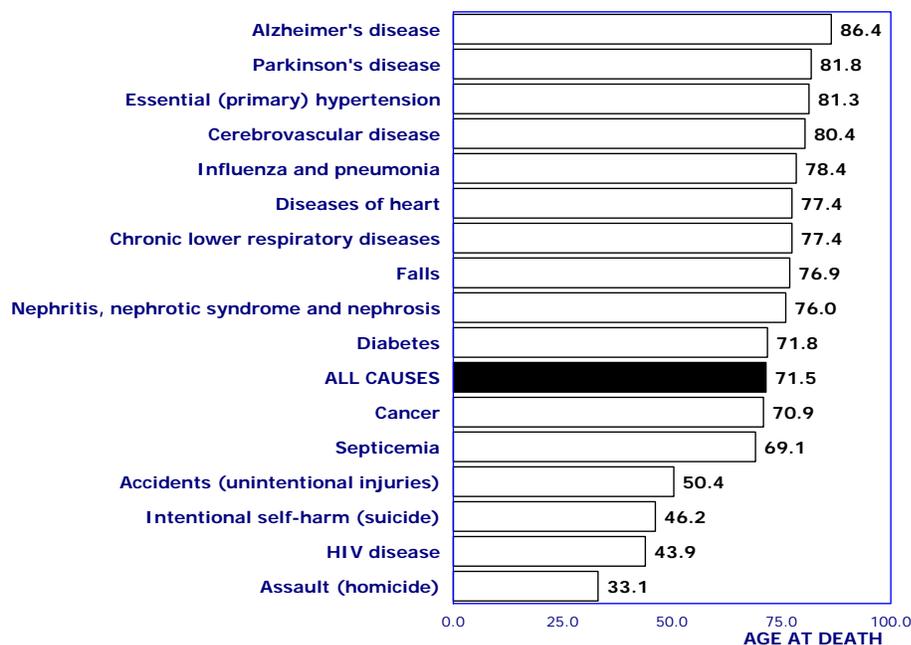


As expected, based on the findings for average age at death, White non-Hispanics were the only group with less than 50 percent of all deaths (45.3 percent) occurring before the expected years of life were reached (Figure 2D-2). The 2002 premature death ratio was 37 percent for White non-Hispanic females and 53.6 percent for White non-Hispanic males (Table 2D-2). In contrast, at least 60 percent of deaths among racial/ethnic minority groups occurred prematurely.

\* Expected years of life at birth for all U.S. residents (76.9 years in 2000).

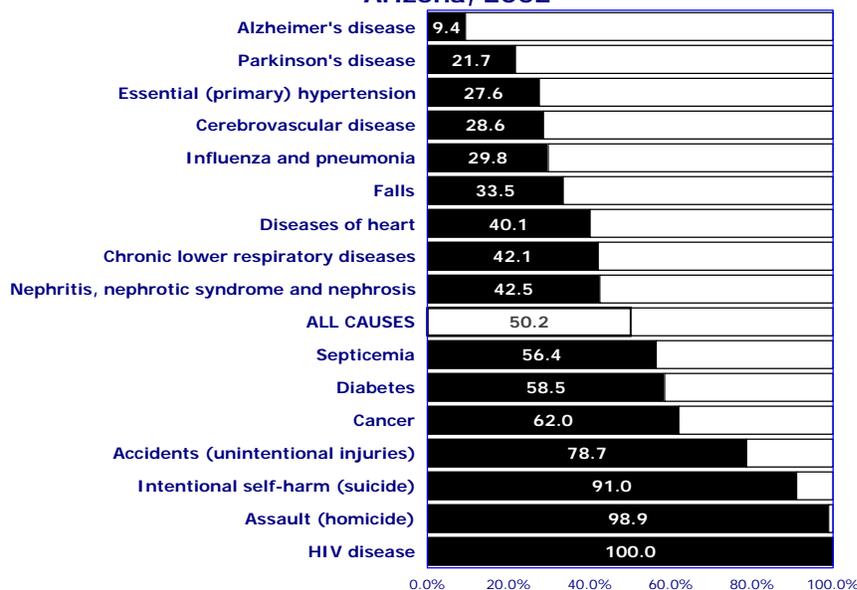
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**Figure 2D-3**  
Average Age At Death for Selected Leading Causes of Death, Arizona, 2002



In 2002, *Alzheimer's disease* had the highest average age at death of 86.4 years, exceeding by almost 15 years the average age at death for all causes (**Figure 2D-3, Table 2D-3**). Among the leading causes of death, *assault (homicide)*, had the lowest average age at death of 33.1 years.

**Figure 2D-4**  
Percent Deaths Before Expected Years of Life Reached\* for Selected Leading Causes of Death, Arizona, 2002



\* Expected years of life at birth for all U.S. residents (77.2 years in 2001).

Only 9.4 percent of deaths from *Alzheimer's disease* occurred before the age of 77.2 years, i.e., before the expected years of life were reached. In contrast, all deaths from *HIV disease* were premature (**Figure 2D-4, Table 2D-4**) and an average age at death from *HIV disease* was 43.9 years (**Figure 2D-3, Table 2D-3**). The average age at death was lower for *assault (homicide)*, which had an average age of 33.1 years and a premature death ratio of 98.9 percent.