

# Prenatal Care Among Native American Women in New Mexico




In New Mexico, Native American women of childbearing age experience higher rates of maternal mortality, diabetes and psychosocial stressors. Access to regular recommended prenatal care is crucial for reducing pregnancy-related complications and disparities.

## Prenatal Care: A Crucial Intervention

### Significant Disparities in Prenatal Care

**ONLY 54.8% of Native American women are likely to receive prenatal care** as compared to 70.4% of non-Hispanic white women. Furthermore, **ONLY 75.5% of Native American women received care as early as they wanted**, compared to nearly 88% of non-Hispanic white women.





### Associated Health Conditions & Risks

Native American women are at **CONTINUALLY HIGHER RISK** for **higher rates of pre-existing and gestational diabetes** compared to non-Hispanic white women.

Rates of **pre-existing diabetes** ranged from 3.1% to 5.1%.

However, rates of **gestational diabetes** ranged from **13.9% to 18.6%, MORE THAN DOUBLE AND TRIPLE** the rates for non-white Hispanic women in comparable years.

### Higher Rates of Maternal & Infant Mortality

Native American Women are *at continually higher risk for maternal and infant mortality*. From 2010-2019, the **maternal mortality rate was 32.7** compared to 23.3 for white women (per 100,000 live births).

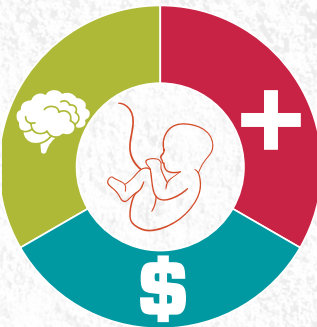
From 2012-2021, **the Infant mortality rate ranged from 3.8 to 7.2 deaths** (per 1000 live births).

## Pregnancy Related Deaths are Preventable

Between 2017-2019, **93% of PREGNANCY-RELATED DEATHS** among Native women *were deemed preventable* by the CDC Maternal Mortality Review Committees in 36 US states. Compared with 80% overall.

**Nearly a third (31%) of deaths** in Native women were related to **mental health conditions**, compared to 22% overall.

## Stress Factors During and After Pregnancy



**Nearly a quarter (24.9%)** of Native women **experienced traumatic stress** during pregnancy, over 10% more than non-Hispanic white women.

**Financial Stress** affected **more than HALF (53.5%)** of Native Women in the year before childbirth.

From 2017-2019, **between 12.5% and 16.4%** reported **postpartum depression**.

## Recommendations: Enhancing Prenatal Care Access

- Expand the development of birth and wellness centers in Native communities that can provide holistic reproductive care. These centers can ensure Native American women are able to access and receive comprehensive prenatal care.
- Design and implement programs to enlighten communities about the importance of early prenatal care. Increased awareness and knowledge can lead to higher utilization rates of early prenatal care.
- Promote the expansion of healthcare facilities, introduction of mobile clinics, and the use of telehealth services in Native American communities. For example, cell phone apps can be used to supplement prenatal care, provide education and help screen for depression.
- Support the establishment and expansion of home visiting programs that are specifically designed to meet the needs of Native American families. These programs can offer personalized support to expectant mothers through paraprofessional visits, enhanced prenatal care, parenting knowledge, and improved maternal and child health outcomes.
- Implement training programs for Native American women to acquire skills as certified professional and/or licensed midwives.

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