



**County of Orange Health Care Agency**  
 Public Health Services  
 Disease Control and Epidemiology  
 Epidemiology & Assessment

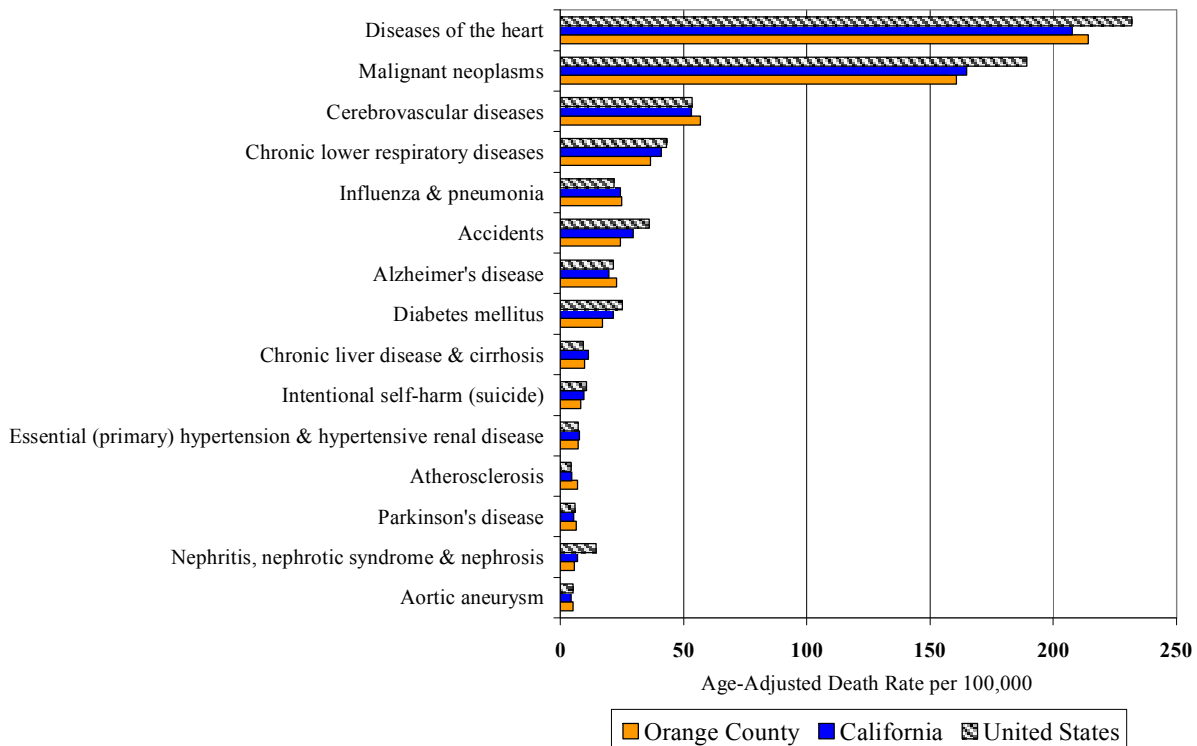
## 2003 MORTALITY DATA FACT SHEET

### COMPARING ORANGE COUNTY WITH CALIFORNIA AND THE UNITED STATES

#### DEATH FREQUENCIES AND RATES

- There were 17,325 deaths among Orange County residents in 2003, an increase (3.2%) from the 16,792 deaths that were registered in 2002.
- The crude death rate was 577.3 per 100,000 in 2003, a 1.7% increase from 2002 when the rate was 567.4.
- The overall age-adjusted death rate for Orange County in 2003 was 688.6 per 100,000.
- The corresponding age-adjusted California rate of 717.2 was slightly higher and the United States rate of 831.2 (a record historical low) was significantly higher than Orange County's rate.
- There were 9,029 female and 8,296 male deaths among Orange County residents in 2003.
- Of the fifteen leading causes of death in Orange County, 8 of the Orange County age-adjusted rates were lower than the United States and 8 were lower than California, as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Age-Adjusted Death Rates per 100,000 Population, 2003**



Source: County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology & Assessment

#### LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH

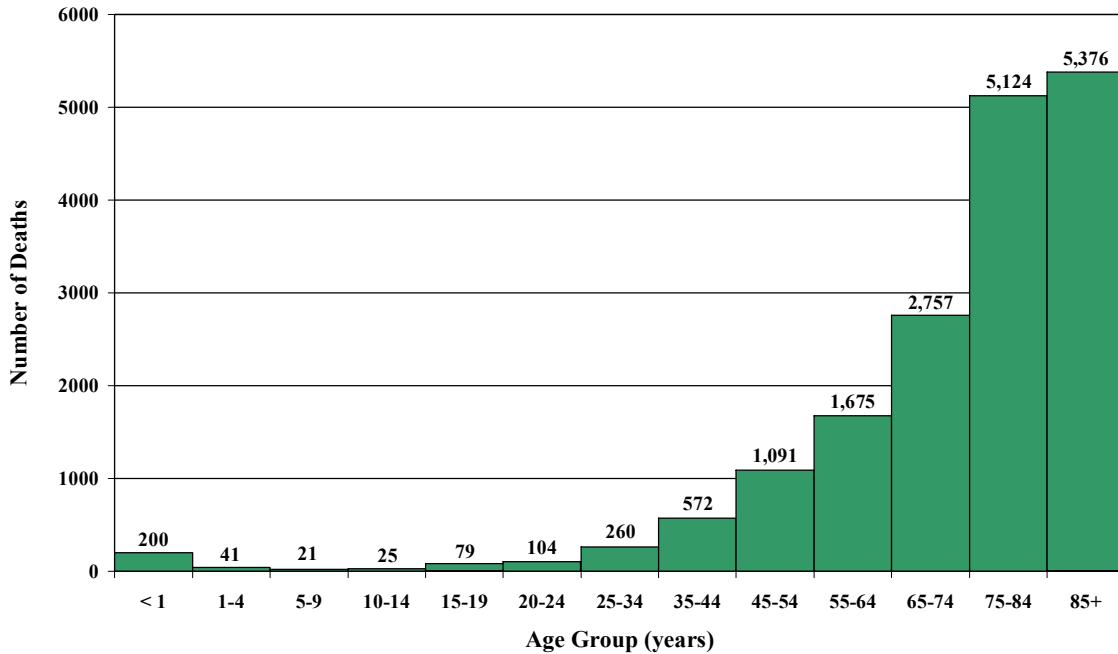
- The fifteen leading causes of death accounted for 87.8% of all deaths in 2003.
- *Diseases of the heart* remained the leading cause of death among Orange County residents, accounting for 5,278 deaths (30.5%). *Malignant neoplasms* ranked second with 4,095 deaths (23.6%).
- Cancers of the trachea, bronchus, and lung accounted for the largest share of *Malignant neoplasms* with 992 deaths (24.2%), followed by lymphomas, leukemias and related cancers with 418 deaths (10.2%).
- The three leading causes of death in 2003 were the same for both males and females: (1) *Diseases of the heart*, (2) *Malignant neoplasms*, and (3) *Cerebrovascular diseases*.

## 2003 MORTALITY DATA FACT SHEET

### DEATHS BY AGE GROUP

- 60.6% of all deaths among Orange County residents in 2003 were among those aged 75 years and older, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Deaths by Age Group, Orange County, 2003



Source: County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology & Assessment

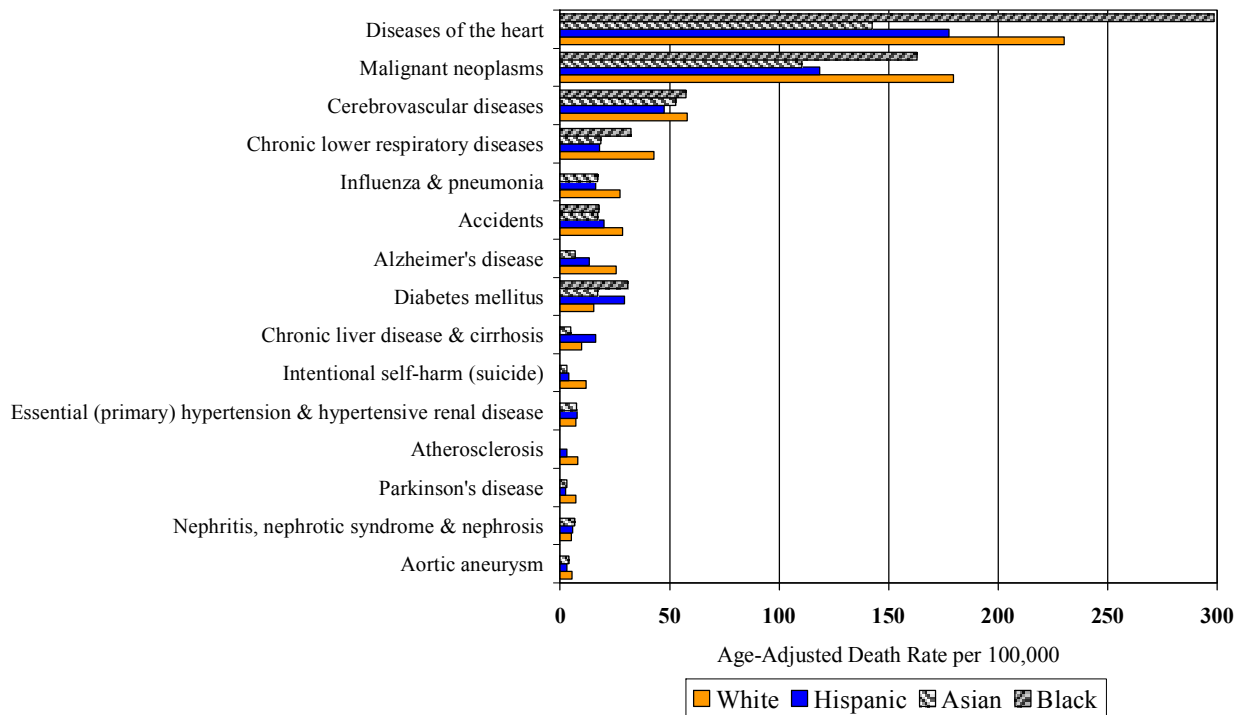
- Among infants less than 1 year of age, the leading cause of death was *Congenital malformation, deformations, and chromosomal abnormalities* (45 deaths), followed by *Disorders relating to short gestation and low birth weight* (19 deaths), and *Atelectasis, Neonatal hemorrhage, and Sudden infant death syndrome* (10 deaths each).
- The leading cause of death for age groups 1-4, 10-14, 15-19, 20-24, and 25-34 years was *Accidents*. For the age groups 5-9 and 35-44 through 65-74 years, *Malignant neoplasms* was the leading cause of death. *Diseases of the heart* was the leading cause of death for those aged 75-84 and 85 years and over.
- *Intentional self-harm (Suicide)* was among the 15 leading causes of death for all age groups from 15-19 through the 65-74 year age group. The number of *Suicides* surpassed *Assault (Homicide)* in each of these age groups except for the 15-19 and 20-24 year age groups.
- *Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) disease*, the 20<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for all ages, was ranked highest among age groups 15-19, 25-34, and 35-44 years (ranked 6<sup>th</sup> for these age categories; 1, 9 and 24 deaths, respectively). Additionally, *HIV disease* was a leading cause of death for 45-54 year olds (ranked 11<sup>th</sup>, 12 deaths), and 55-64 year olds (ranked 14<sup>th</sup>, 7 deaths).

## 2003 MORTALITY DATA FACT SHEET

### DEATH FREQUENCIES AND RATES BY RACE/ETHNICITY

- Non-Hispanic Whites accounted for 79.4% of all Orange County deaths in the year 2003, while Hispanics accounted for 10.8%, Southeast Asians 2.8%, Other Asians 5.1%, Blacks 1.2%, and others less than 1%.
- Age-adjusted rates of death per 100,000 population were as follows: Blacks 852.8; Non-Hispanic Whites 747.3; Hispanics 559.2; and Asians 472.1.
- *Diseases of the heart* was the leading cause of death for Non-Hispanic Whites, Hispanics, Asians, and Blacks.
- Age-adjusted rates were higher for Non-Hispanic Whites than Hispanics for 11 of the 15 leading causes of death, and higher for Whites than Asians for 12 of the 15 leading causes of death. Due to a relatively small Black population in Orange County, some rates are too unstable to be presented and are therefore only presented for 6 of the 15 leading causes of death for this race/ethnicity category. Of those 6 leading causes, Blacks had higher rates than did Non-Hispanic Whites for 2 leading causes, higher rates than Asians for 6 leading causes and higher rates than Hispanics for 5 leading causes.
- Blacks had the highest age-adjusted death rate due to *Diseases of the heart*, followed by Non-Hispanic Whites, Hispanics, and Asians.
- Non-Hispanic Whites had the highest age-adjusted death rate due to *Malignant neoplasms*, followed by Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians. Age-adjusted rates for these and other leading causes of death are shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3. Age-Adjusted Death Rates by Race/Ethnicity per 100,000 Population, Orange County, 2003**



Note: Due to fewer than five deaths, rates are not presented for Blacks for the following causes; Influenza & pneumonia, Alzheimer's disease, Chronic liver disease & cirrhosis, Suicide, Essential (primary) hypertension & hypertensive renal disease, Athlerosclerosis, Parkinson's disease, Nephritis, nephritic syndrome & nephrosis, and Aortic aneurysm. Rates are not presented for Asians for Atherosclerosis.

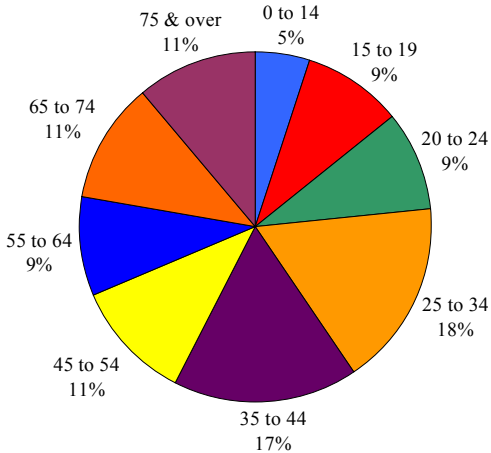
Source: County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology & Assessment

## 2003 MORTALITY DATA FACT SHEET

### INJURY MORTALITY (EXTERNAL CAUSES OF DEATH)

- *Motor vehicle accidents* was the leading external cause of death in Orange County in 2003, with 278 deaths. There were 183 deaths among males and 95 among females. The age groups with the highest rates of *Motor vehicle accident* deaths per 100,000 were 75 years and older (21.8) and 65-74 years olds (19.6). The proportion of *Motor vehicle accident* deaths by age category is shown in Figure 4.

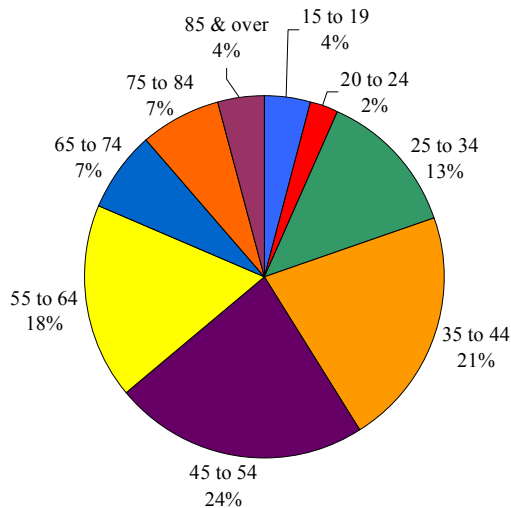
**Figure 4. Proportion of Deaths due to *Motor vehicle accidents* by Age Group (Years), Orange County, 2003**



Source: County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology & Assessment

- The second leading external cause of death was *Suicide* with 243 deaths. There were 175 deaths among males and 68 among females. The age groups with the highest rates of suicide per 100,000 were 85 years and older (26.6) and 75-84 year olds (17.2). The proportion of *Suicides* by age category is shown in Figure 5.

**Figure 5. Proportion of Deaths due to *Suicide* by Age Group (Years), Orange County, 2003**

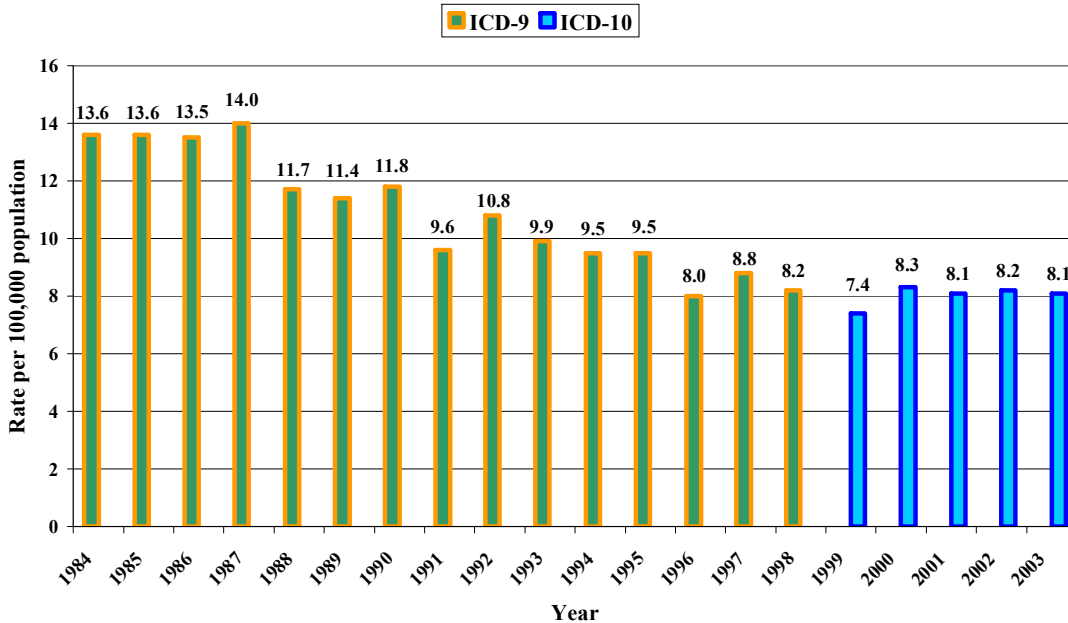


Source: County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology & Assessment

## 2003 MORTALITY DATA FACT SHEET

- The third leading external cause of death was *Accidental poisoning* (157 deaths), followed by *Falls* (133 deaths), and *Homicide* (73 deaths).
- Among victims of *Falls*, 66.2% of deaths were among those aged 75 years and older.
- There were a total of 312 transport accident deaths, including 154 deaths to occupants of a car, pick-up truck, or van; 64 pedestrian deaths; 28 motorcyclist deaths; 10 pedal cyclist deaths; and 56 other transport accident deaths.
- A total of 28 deaths by *Accidental drowning* occurred; of these, 7 (25.0%) were among children aged 1-4 years of age.
- Firearms were involved in 163 deaths: 105 suicides, 43 homicides, 10 deaths during legal intervention, 3 accidental deaths, and 2 deaths due to undetermined intent. Firearms were used in 43.0% of suicides and 58.9% of homicides.
- Figure 6 shows that in the last 20 years, the suicide rate has decreased 40.4% from 13.6 per 100,000 in 1984 to 8.1 in 2003 with a high of 14.0 in 1987 and a low of 7.4 in 1999.

**Figure 6. Intentional Self-Harm (Suicide) Mortality Rate,  
Orange County, 1984-2003**




Note: Beginning in 1999, the federal government and the State of California implemented significant changes in the method of coding underlying cause of death by adopting the International Classification of Diseases – Tenth Revision (ICD-10). It is important to keep in mind that these changes make direct comparisons with mortality data from years 1998 and prior of uncertain validity, with the exception of comparisons of deaths due to all causes.

Source: County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology & Assessment

Sources:

- County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology & Assessment, 2006.
- State of California, Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics of California 2003.
- Hoyert DL, Kung HC, Smith BL. Deaths: Preliminary Data for 2003, National Vital Statistics Reports; Vol. 53, No. 15.
- Hyattsville, Maryland: National Center for Health Statistics. 2005.

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