


Data & Statistics on Birth Defects

Birth defects are common, costly, and critical. Read below for the latest national statistics on the occurrence of birth defects in the United States.

For data on specific birth defects, please visit [the specific birth defects pages](#).

In the United States

- Birth defects affect one in every 33 babies (about 3% of all babies) born in the United States each year. [\[Read article\]](#)
- Birth defects are the leading cause of infant deaths, accounting for 20% of all infant deaths. [\[Read article\]](#)  [\[PDF – 994 KB\]](#)

Brain/Spine Defects

Specific Defects	How Often Do They Occur?	How Many Babies Are Affected?
Anencephaly	1 in every 4,647 births	847
Encephalocele	1 in every 10,502 births	375
Spina bifida	1 in every 2,758 births	1,427

Eye Defects

Specific Defects	How Often Do They Occur?	How Many Babies Are Affected?
Anophthalmia/microphthalmia	1 in every 5,243 births	751

Heart Defects

Specific Defect	How Often Do They Occur?	How Many Babies Are Affected?
Atrioventricular septal defect	1 in every 1,859 births	2,118
Coarctation of the aorta	1 in every 1,795 births	2,194
Common truncus (truncus arteriosus)	1 in every 15,696 births	251
Double outlet right ventricle	1 in every 5,997 births	656
Ebstein anomaly	1 in every 13,047 births	302

Hypoplastic left heart syndrome	1 in every 3,841 births	1,025
Interrupted aortic arch	1 in every 16,066 births	245
Pulmonary valve atresia and stenosis	1 in every 1,052 births	3,742
Pulmonary valve atresia	1 in every 7,104 births	554
Single ventricle	1 in every 13,351 births	295
Tetralogy of Fallot	1 in every 2,171 births	1,813
Total anomalous pulmonary venous connection	1 in every 7,809 births	504
Transposition of the great arteries	1 in every 2,695 births	1,461
Dextro-transposition of great arteries	1 in every 3,413 births	1,153
Tricuspid valve atresia and stenosis	1 in every 5,938 births	663
Tricuspid valve atresia	1 in every 9,751 births	404

Mouth/Face Defects

Specific Defects	How Often Do They Occur?	How Many Babies Are Affected?
Cleft lip with cleft palate	1 in every 1,563 births	2,518
Cleft lip without cleft palate	1 in every 2,807 births	1,402
Cleft palate	1 in every 1,687 births	2,333

Stomach/Intestine Defects


Specific Defects	How Often Do They Occur?	How Many Babies Are Affected?
Esophageal atresia/tracheoesophageal fistula	1 in every 4,144 births	950
Rectal and large intestinal atresia/stenosis	1 in every 2,242 births	1,756

Muscle/Bone Defects

Specific Defects	How Often Do They Occur?	How Many Babies Are Affected?
Clubfoot	1 in every 593 births	6,643
Diaphragmatic hernia	1 in every 3,591 births	1,096
Gastroschisis	1 in every 1,953 births	2,015
Limb defects	1 in every 1,943 births	2,026
Omphalocele	1 in every 4,175 births	943

Chromosome (Gene) Defects

Specific Defects	How Often Do They Occur?	How Many Babies Are Affected?
Trisomy 13 (Patau syndrome)	1 in every 7,409 births	531
Trisomy 18 (Edwards syndrome)	1 in every 3,315 births	1,187
Trisomy 21 (Down syndrome)	1 in every 707 births	5,568

* Mai CT, Isenburg JL, Canfield MA, Meyer RE, Correa A, Alverson CJ, Lupo PJ, Riehle-Colarusso T, Cho SJ, Aggarwal D, Kirby RS. National population-based estimates for major birth defects, 2010–2014. *Birth Defects Research*. 2019; 111(18): 1420-1435. [\[Read article\]](#) 

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