

4	Cancer	2.1	Homicide	0.6	Congenital anomalies	0.8	Cancer	3.0
5	Heart disease	1.1	Respiratory Disease	0.4	Homicide	0.7	Heart disease	1.4

Modified from [Osterman MJK, Kochanek KD, MacDorman MF, et al](#): Annual summary of vital statistics: 2012-2013, *Pediatrics* 135(6): 1115-1125.

After 1 year of age, the cause of death changes dramatically, with unintentional injuries (accidents) being the leading cause from the youngest ages to the adolescent years. Violent deaths have been steadily increasing among young people ages 10 through 25 years, especially African-Americans and males. Homicide is the third leading cause of death in the 15- to 19-year age-group (see [Table 1-3](#)). Children 12 years old and older tend to be killed by nonfamily members (acquaintances and gangs, typically of the same race) and most frequently by firearms. Suicide, a form of self-violence, continues to be a leading cause of death among children and adolescents 10 to 19 years old.

Childhood Morbidity

Acute illness is defined as an illness with symptoms severe enough to limit activity or require medical attention. Respiratory illness accounts for approximately 50% of all acute conditions, 11% are caused by infections and parasitic disease, and 15% are caused by injuries. The chief illness of childhood is the common cold.

The types of diseases that children contract during childhood vary according to age. For example, upper respiratory tract infections and diarrhea decrease in frequency with age, whereas other disorders, such as acne and headaches, increase. Children who have had a particular type of problem are more likely to have that problem again. Morbidity is not distributed randomly in children. Recent concern has focused on groups of children who have increased morbidity: homeless children, children living in poverty, LBW children, children with chronic illnesses, foreign-born adopted children, and children in day care centers. A number of factors place these groups at risk for poor health. A major cause is barriers to health care, especially for the homeless, the poverty stricken, and those with chronic health problems. Other factors include improved survival of children with chronic health problems, particularly infants of VLBW.