# Selected Findings:

* Crude ve decreased substantially over the past 120 years, from population in 1900 to in 2010 [Furthermore, since the age distribution of the population has shifted markedly to older ages over this period, the decrease in the age-adjusted mortality rate, a better overall measure of a population’s health, is proportionally much larger than the decrease in the crude rates--but age-adjusted rates cannot be calculated with the data from this project.]
* Since 1900, causes of California mortality have shifted from communicable diseases to chronic diseases. In 1990, the largest proportion of deaths, XX%, was due to communicable disease. By 2019 this proportion had decreased to XX% of deaths, with XX% due to chronic conditions (including cancer and cardiovascular disease).
* While communicable diseases generally decreased sharply and steadily over the decades, there have been important exceptions including the influenza pandemic of 1918, the emergence of HIV/AIDS in the 1980’s, and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019.
* In 1900, the leading cause of death was Tuberculosis, followed by other communicable diseases (primarily communicable respiratory diseases). In contrast, Tuberculosis caused almost no deaths in 2019, and the leading causes, heart disease, Alzheimer’s disease and cancer are all chronic.
* The emergence of COVID-19, a communicable disease, and one of the leading causes of death in 2020, clearly indicates that these patterns can and do change.

Discussion Etc.

* This decrease in death rates can be somewhat attributed to advances in medical care, but perhaps even more important are the strides made through the work of public health professionals