



How much is spent on healthcare in Kentucky? What is the death rate in Kentucky?

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What are the basics of healthcare issues in Kentucky?





How has the death rate changed in Kentucky?

Death rate (age-adjusted)

In **2022**, Kentucky's age-adjusted death rate was **1,080.2** deaths per 100,000 people.

After accounting for differences in age makeup between states, Kentucky is ranked 3rd-highest based on its death rate.

The death rate, also known as mortality rate, is determined using this data in combination with population data. A simple per capita calculation — called the crude death rate — isn't ideal for comparisons, as it doesn't account for differences in age makeup between two groups. For example, an area where more than 50% of the population is over 65 will likely have a higher crude death rate than a place where 10% is 65 or older. Age-adjusted death rates, shown here, allow for comparison between two populations with different age makeups. ([Explore Kentucky's demographics.](#))

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is the primary federal agency tracking deaths nationwide. It maintains the National Vital Statistics System, which gathers death information from every state.

Kentucky's age-adjusted death rate increased after the COVID-19 pandemic. It was 18.5% higher than in 2022 than in 2019.





Top underlying causes of death

In **2022**, the top cause of death in **Kentucky** was **heart disease**.

The age-adjusted death rate of heart disease was 216.3 per 100,000 Kentucky residents. That's 23.3% higher than the overall heart disease death rate in the US.

The National Vital Statistics System tracks [the underlying \(or primary\) cause of death](#) by recording information from death certificates. The leading causes of death differ by state.



How healthy are people in Kentucky?

Health indicators

In **2021**, the percentage of **Kentucky** adults who have been told they have high cholesterol was **30.1%**, **down 1.1** percentage points from **2015**.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention conducts the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey, a key way to track health trends at the state level. The survey is one of many sources that public health agencies use for prioritizing and monitoring health interventions.

Here's how Kentucky fares on other health indicators:

- **Arthritis:** In 2021, 30.8% of Kentucky adults were ever diagnosed with arthritis, down 0.9 percentage points from 2015.
- **Hypertension (high blood pressure):** In 2021, 39.7% of Kentucky adults have been told they had high blood pressure, up 0.9 percentage points from 2015.
- **Obesity:** In 2021, 37.1% of Kentucky adults were classified as obese (based on body mass index), up 5.0 percentage points from 2015.



What is the life expectancy in Kentucky?

Life expectancy at birth

In **2020**, **Kentucky** ranked **47th** based on life expectancy. A newborn in **Kentucky** was expected to live **73.5 years**.

Life expectancy in Kentucky is 3.5 years lower than life expectancy in the US overall.

Life expectancy is a projection estimating the average age of death for people born today. The calculation uses data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The data can be a way to assess the impact of health issues such as overdoses and COVID-19.



How much is spent on the health of Kentucky residents?

Healthcare spending per capita

In **2020**, healthcare spending by businesses, insurance agencies, households, and governments cost **\$11,965** per Kentucky resident.

Kentucky ranks 25th-highest based on healthcare spending per person.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services provides estimates of healthcare spending in its National Health Expenditure Accounts (NHEA). The data is further broken down into other categories, including the state of residence of the recipient of care. The estimates are calculated from a number of sources, including the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

While healthcare spending is expected to grow with the population, per-capita trends can provide context on how costs have changed over time.

[Learn more about the economy in Kentucky](#)





How many people in Kentucky do not have health insurance?

Share of Kentucky's population without health insurance

In **2021**, **5.7%** of Kentucky's residents weren't covered by health insurance. That's a lower share than the US overall.

Kentucky is ranked 37th-highest based on its share of the uninsured population.

Health insurance in Kentucky is available through various avenues. The primary way to get insurance is privately through employers. Publicly funded options include Medicare (primarily for people 65 and older), Medicaid (for low-income individuals), and plans available for [active-duty military members](#) and [veterans](#). The Affordable Care Act expanded access to Medicaid in some states and established an online marketplace where people could buy private coverage.

Since 2013, the year before most ACA provisions went into effect, the share of the uninsured population in Kentucky 8.6 percentage points lower percentage points. Data from the Census Bureau's [American Community Survey](#) shows that the decrease in the share of uninsured residents occurred in every state.





Health insurance coverage by type

In **2021**, **45.4%** of Kentucky's population was covered by public health insurance plans funded by governments at the federal, state, or local level.

The Census Bureau's [American Community Survey](#) asks respondents in Kentucky about their health insurance coverage source, including private plans (employer-based, direct-purchase, and Tricare or military) and publicly funded plans (like Medicaid, Medicare, or VA healthcare). The values in this chart may add up to more than 100%, because some people may be covered by multiple insurance types.

Additionally, 62.8% of Kentucky's population were covered by private health insurance plans.



[Are there fewer babies being born in Kentucky?](#)

Birth rate

In **2021**, there were **11.6** babies born per 1,000 Kentucky residents.

As with most states, Kentucky's birth rate has been trending down in recent years.

The birth rate is the number of live births per 1,000 people. The data shown here is from the Census Bureau. Looking at the data as a rate rather than just the number of births allows a better understanding of changes over time.

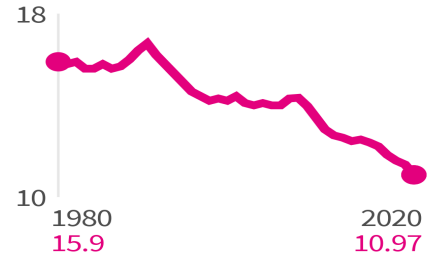
Due to its role in population growth, the birth rate impacts various issues, including health and education. The [CDC](#) has attributed a recent drop in the birth rate to "changing patterns in social and cultural norms, as well as increases in educational attainment and contraceptive use."



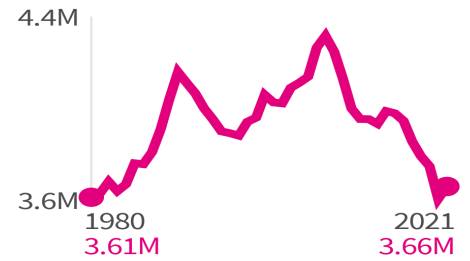
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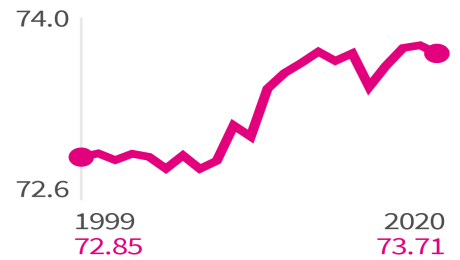
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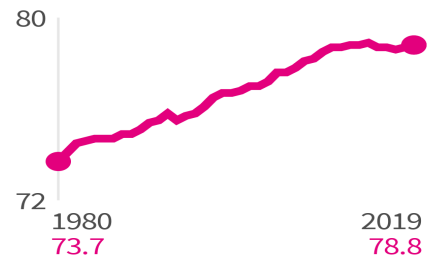
Births



Average age of death



Life expectancy in years



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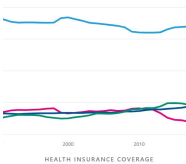
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