

REPORT CARD OF COMMUNITY HEALTH INDICATORS December 2023



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MESSAGE FROM THE HEALTH OFFICER

We are pleased to present our 2023 Report Card of Community Health Indicators. This report card is a tool we use to evaluate the health of Howard County and identify public health gaps and population needs.

You will find the latest data and analysis of several key community health indicators. This report highlights opportunities for improvement and the progress made toward addressing identified gaps, including the expansion of the It's OK to Ask campaign to confront rising suicide rates across the lifespan and the launch of the P.E.A.C.E. Project to provide free perinatal health navigation services to pregnant residents and individuals caring for young children.

With the collective contributions of a dedicated public health team, we remain focused on current and evolving public health needs of our County.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maura J. Rossman MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maura J. Rossman, MD
Health Officer
Howard County Health Department

ABOUT HOWARD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MISSION

To promote, preserve, and protect the health and well-being of all in Howard County.

VISION

A model community in which health equity and optimal wellness are accessible for all who live, work, and visit Howard County.

VALUES



Leadership

We advocate for and implement effective public health practices. We are a trusted source of health services and information.



Culture of Respect & Caring

We value and respect our staff, community partners, and all those we serve.



Health Equity

We are proactive in identifying and removing barriers so that every person has the opportunity to achieve their full health potential.



Advocacy

We inform, educate, and empower to initiate change.



Innovation & Excellence

We encourage innovation and pursue excellence in our endeavors.



Professionalism

We practice mutual respect, transparency, and accountability.



Collaboration

We cultivate and preserve partnerships to achieve common goals based on a shared vision.



Integrity

We value the public's trust and pledge to provide the highest standard of service.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Changing demographic, economic, and education indicators in the County can signal shifts in health and related needs.

2021 Estimates	Howard	Maryland	U.S.
Population			
Total Population	334,529	6,165,129	331,893,745
% change April 2010 -July 2021	16.5%	6.8%	7.5%
Female	50.8%	51.3%	50.5%
Foreign born persons*	24.2%	15.9%	13.6%
Race, Age and Ethnicity			
White	48.4%	49.0%	61.2%
Black	20.8%	29.4%	12.1%
Asian	19.8%	6.6%	5.8%
Hispanic, any race	7.6%	11.1%	18.8%
Under 5 years old	5.5%	5.7%	5.6%
Under 18 years	24.1%	22.1%	22.1%
65 years and over	14.7%	16.3%	16.8%
Median Age*	39.0	38.9	38.4
Household, Economic and Education Indicators			
Median Household Income	\$131,412	\$90,129	\$69,717
All ages in poverty	6.2%	10.3%	12.8%
Children (<18) in poverty	7.4%	14.0%	16.9%
Unemployment Rate**	4.0	5.3	5.3
Uninsured (Ages 18-64)	4.9%	8.1%	12.1%
Bachelor's degree or higher	64.6%	42.5%	35.0%

Total Medicare Hospital/Medical Enrollment, Howard County, as of June 2023: 53,603
 Maryland Medicaid MCO Enrollment, Howard County, as of August 2023: 56,111

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS; Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE); Small Area Health Insurance Estimates (SAHIE). Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services; Maryland Medicaid eHealth Statistics, MDH.

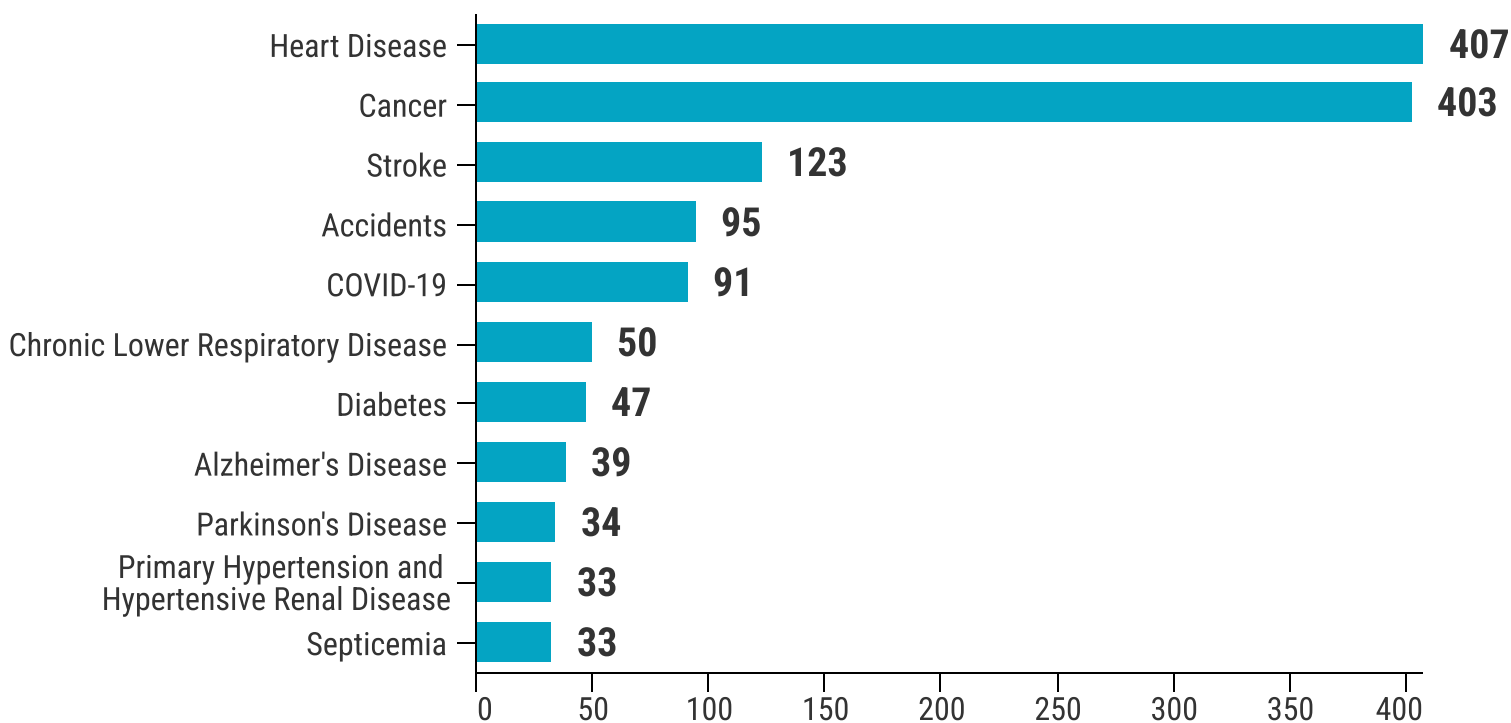
*2017-21; **Bureau of Labor Statistics (annual average).

LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH

Risk Factors

In 2021, 1,997 Howard County residents died. The most common causes of death were heart disease, cancer and stroke. Many of the associated risk factors are preventable. Reductions in smoking, high blood pressure, excess weight, physical inactivity, high dietary salt and high sugar consumption can lead to reductions in long-term disability and premature death. COVID-19 became the fifth leading cause of death in 2021, a significant shift from recent years. Vaccinations and mitigation factors, such as social distancing and handwashing can reduce COVID-19 deaths.

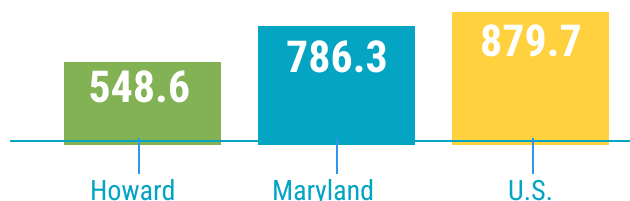
Leading Causes of Death, Howard County, 2021



Compared to 2011, in 2021

- Deaths from all causes increased by a count of 487
- Death rates[^] decreased by 13% (631.4 vs 548.6)

Death Rate* for All Causes

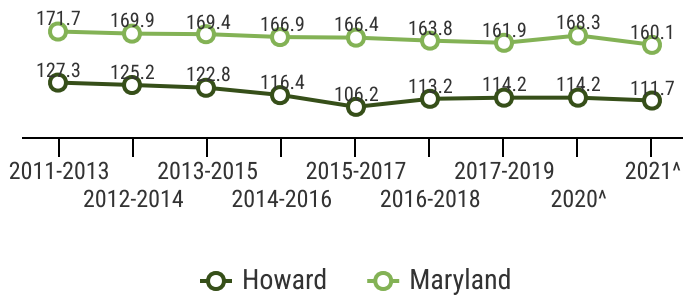


Data Source: Maryland Vital Statistics Administration; National Center for Health Statistics Report
 *Age-adjusted rates per 100,000 population 2021; [^]2009-2011 vs 2021.

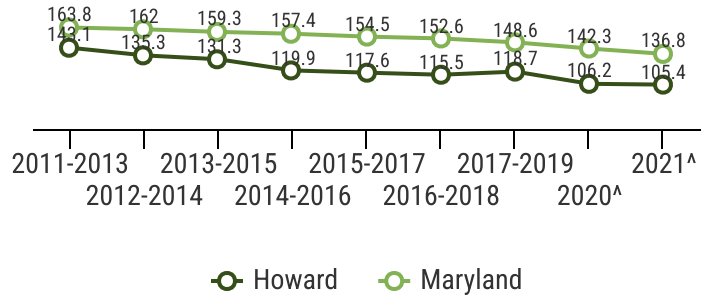
MORTALITY RATE* TRENDS

The overall life expectancy in Howard County is 82.8. The leading cause of mortality in Howard County was heart disease. The mortality rate can be decreased by eating a healthy diet, increasing physical activity and reducing smoking.

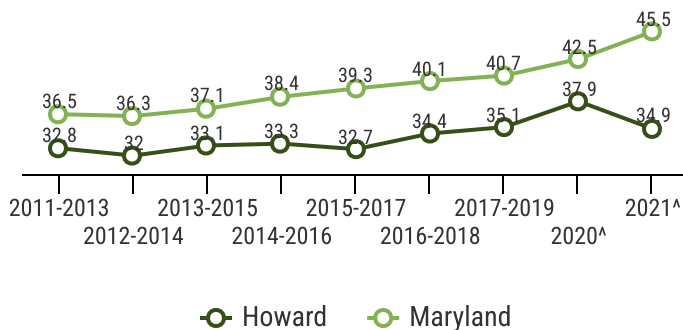
Heart Disease



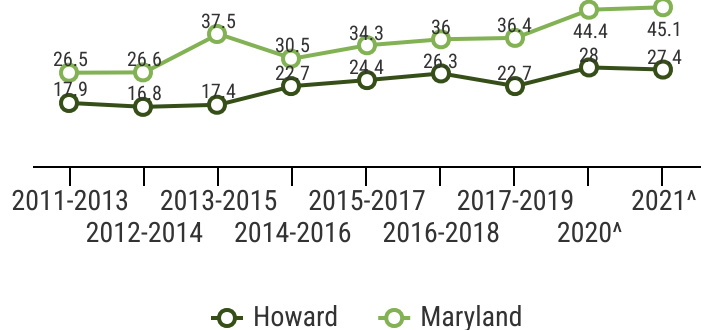
Cancer



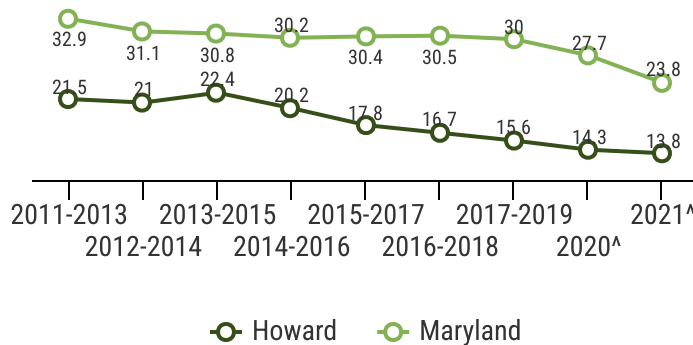
Stroke



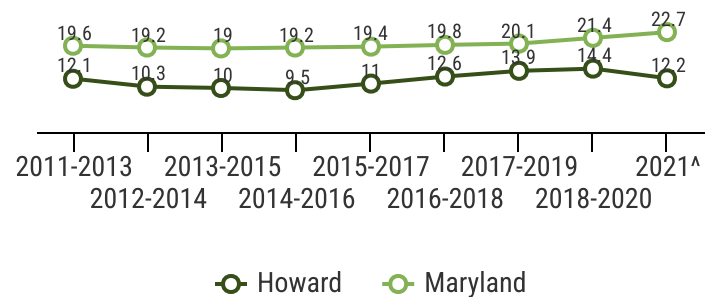
Accidents



Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease



Diabetes



Data Source: Maryland Vital Statistics Administration.

*3-year average age-adjusted rates per 100,000 population. [^]3-year average age-adjusted rate not available

CANCER INCIDENCE

Rates of newly diagnosed cancers are stable in Howard County, Maryland, and the U.S. On average, 1,496 new cases of cancer are diagnosed each year in Howard County.

Breast and prostate cancer are responsible for about one-third of newly diagnosed cancers. On average each year in Howard County, 266 women are diagnosed with breast cancer, and 263 men with prostate cancer. Melanoma and prostate cancer incidence rates are increasing in Howard County. Melanoma, pancreatic cancer, and prostate cancer incidence rates are increasing in Maryland.

Howard County Health Department provides various programs to reduce cancer deaths and health disparity in cancer outcomes. The Breast and Cervical Cancer Program reduces breast and cervical cancer deaths through education, screening, diagnosis, patient navigation services, and linkages to treatment resources. The Colorectal Cancer program provides cancer education and offers screening to at risk individuals.

Cancer Incidence Rates* for Selected Sites Howard County, 2016-2020

Cancer Type	Average County Case Count	Howard Rates	Maryland Rates	U.S. Rates
All Sites (Both Genders)	1,496	409.1 ●	449.7 ●	442.3 ●
Breast (Female)	266	137.0 ●	133.2 ●	127.0 ▲
Cervical (Female)	9	5.1 ●	6.6 ●	7.5 ●
Colorectal (Both Genders)	108	30.7 ●	35.2 ●	36.5 ▼
Colorectal (Male)	55	33.6 ▼	39.0 ●	41.7 ▼
Colorectal (Female)	54	28.0 ▼	32.1 ●	32.0 ▼
Liver (Both Genders)	20	5.3 ●	8.7 ●	8.6 ●
Lung/Bronchus (Both Genders)	118	33.5 ▼	51.8 ▼	54.0 ▼
Lung/Bronchus (Male)	57	36.1 ▼	56.4 ▼	61.1 ▼
Lung/Bronchus (Female)	61	31.5 ▼	48.5 ▼	48.6 ▼
Melanoma (Both Genders)	109	29.9 ▲	24.5 ▲	22.5 ●
Pancreas (Both Genders)	48	13.5 ●	13.7 ▲	13.2 ▲
Prostate (Male)	263	141.0 ▲	135.7 ▲	110.5 ▲

Trend Key ▼ FALLING ● STABLE ▲ RISING

Data Source: State Cancer Profiles, CDC, NCHS. *Age-adjusted rates per 100,000 population

CANCER MORTALITY

Cancer death rates have declined in Howard County, Maryland and the U.S. Between 2016-2020, an average of 397 Howard County residents died annually from cancer. Lung cancer is the most common cause of cancer death and the most preventable. The main way to prevent lung cancer is to avoid smoking (see page 14 for smoking information). On average each year, 69 people die from lung cancer in Howard County. Death rates from liver cancer and pancreatic cancer remain stable in Howard County.

Cancer Mortality Rates* for Selected Sites Howard County, 2016-2020

Cancer Type	Average County Case Count	Howard Rates	Maryland Rates	U.S. Rates
All Sites (Both Genders)	397	115.2 ▼	148.9 ▼	149.4 ▼
Breast (Female)	31	15.9 ▼	21.0 ▼	19.6 ▼
Cervical (Female)	Not Available	Not Available	2.0 ▼	2.2 ▼
Colorectal (Both Genders)	35	10.1 ▼	13.2 ▼	13.1 ▼
Colorectal (Male)	17	10.9 ▼	15.7 ▼	15.7 ▼
Colorectal (Female)	19	9.4 ▼	11.3 ▼	11.0 ▼
Liver (Both Genders)	17	4.6 ●	6.4 ●	6.6 ●
Lung/Bronchus (Both Genders)	69	20.4 ▼	33.5 ▼	35.0 ▼
Lung/Bronchus (Male)	34	22.5 ▼	39.1 ▼	42.2 ▼
Lung/Bronchus (Female)	35	18.6 ▼	29.3 ▼	29.3 ▼
Melanoma (Both Genders)	5	1.4 ▼	1.8 ▼	2.1 ▼
Pancreas (Both Genders)	37	10.6 ●	11.3 ●	11.1 ●
Prostate (Male)	22	16.5 ▼	20.1 ●	18.8 ●

Trend Key ▼ FALLING ● STABLE ▲ RISING

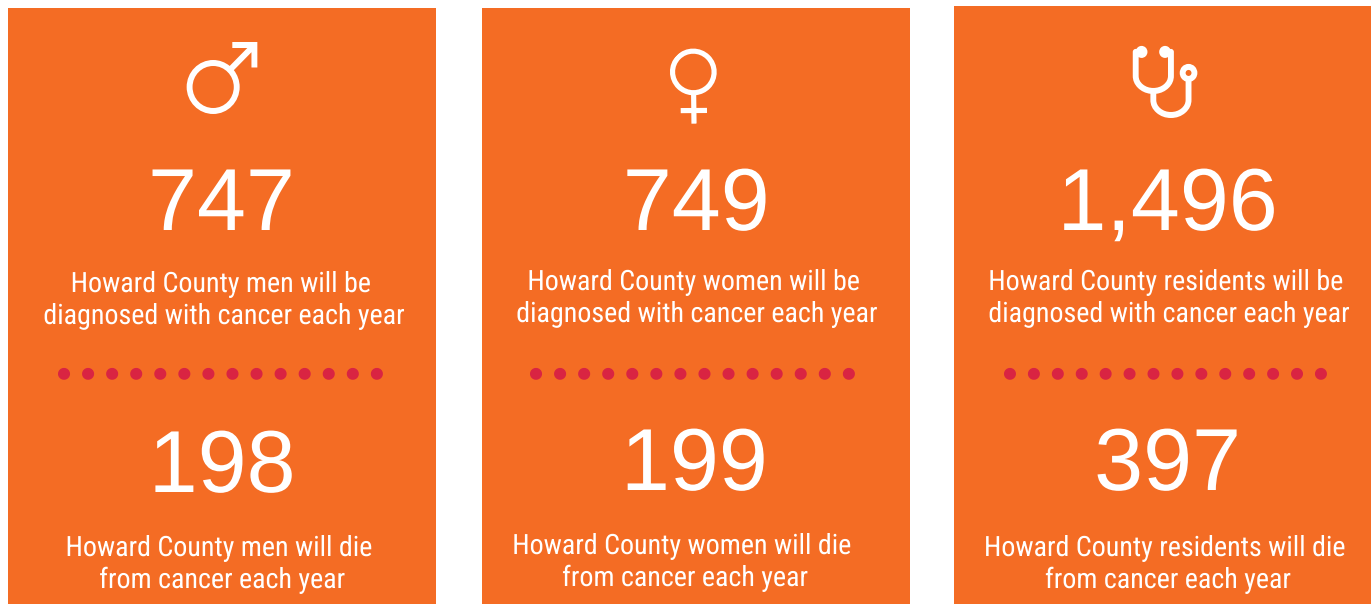
Data Source: State Cancer Profiles, CDC, NCHS. *Age-adjusted rates per 100,000 population

PREVENTIVE HEALTH SCREENING

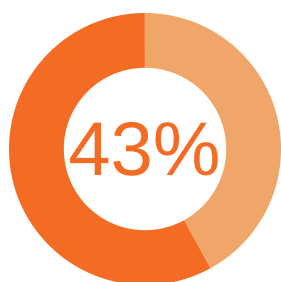
Screening for cancers allow for early detection and treatment to prevent deaths.

Cancer

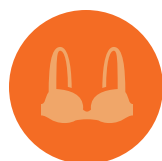
Cancer Cases and Deaths, Howard County, 2016-2020 (Annual Averages)



Cancer Screening^{*^}, 2020



Breast, Cervical, Colorectal, and Prostate cancer account for 43% of all new cancer cases



88.7% women age 50+ had a mammogram in the past 2 years to screen for Breast cancer



15.5% men had a colonoscopy in the past 5 years to screen for Colorectal cancer



68.3% women had a Pap test in past 3 years to screen for Cervical cancer



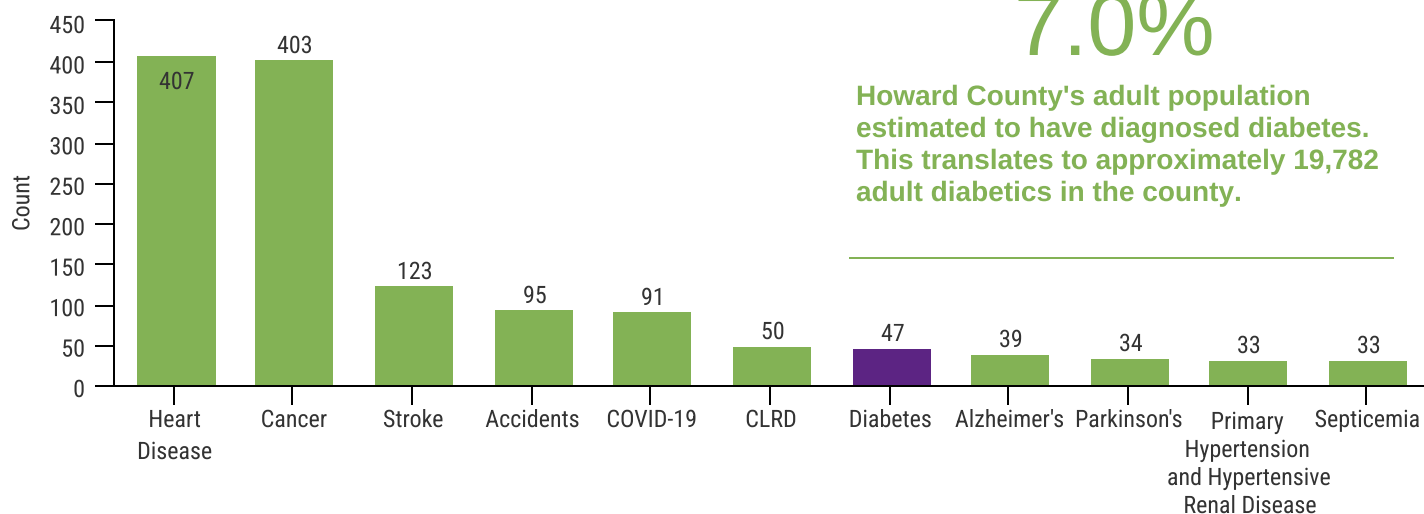
41.4% men age 40+ ever had a PSA test to screen for Prostate cancer

Data Source: State Cancer Profiles, CDC, NCHS (annual averages). ^{*}Age-adjusted rates from Maryland BRFSS accessed 5October2023
[^]Refer to USPSTF (<https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/>) for cancer screening recommendations

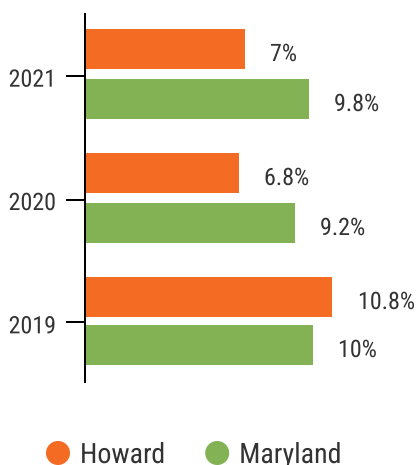
DIABETES

Diabetes is one of the leading causes of death in Howard County. On average, about 4,000 people are seen in the emergency department and inpatient on a yearly basis in Howard County. Type 2 diabetes diagnoses can be reduced by eating a healthy diet, regularly exercising, and maintaining a healthy weight. Diabetes is also a significant risk factor for heart disease, stroke and chronic kidney disease. The Howard County Health Department Community Engagement team partners with organizations to provide education and health screenings in the community.

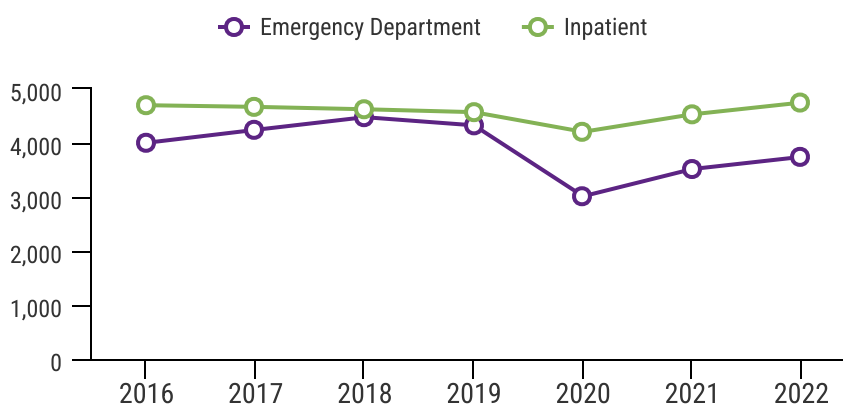
Leading Causes of Death, Howard County, 2021



Doctor Diagnosed Diabetes^A Howard and Maryland, 2019-2021



Diabetes Emergency Department and Inpatient Visits



Data Source: Maryland Vital Statistics Administration; Maryland BRFSS accessed 5May2023; HSCRC Case Mix data, CRISP Reporting Services
^ARespondents were asked "Have you ever been told by a doctor, nurse, or other health professional that you have diabetes?" Excludes women told only during pregnancy (age-adjusted rates). CLRD = Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases *2020

WEIGHT, NUTRITION & EXERCISE

Healthy weight, nutrition and exercise are important factors in preventing many chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers. More than 1 in 2 persons in Howard County is either overweight or obese. Dietary habits have not improved and more than 25% stated that they could not find time to exercise. Less than 20% of adults eat the recommended daily amounts of fruits and vegetables.



OVERWEIGHT

1 in 3 is overweight.

29%



OBESE

1 in 4 is obese.

25%



OVERWEIGHT

1 in 5 were told their child should lose weight by healthcare professional.

18%



FRUIT

1 in 5 eat fruit three times or more per day.

18%



VEGETABLES

1 in 6 eat vegetables three times or more per day.

16%



SODA

1 in 9 drink regular soda daily.

11%



ANY EXERCISE

4 in 5 reported exercising in the past week.

80%



OUTSIDE EXERCISE

7 in 10 got exercise outdoors.

71%



TIME

Time was the most common reason for not exercising.

27%

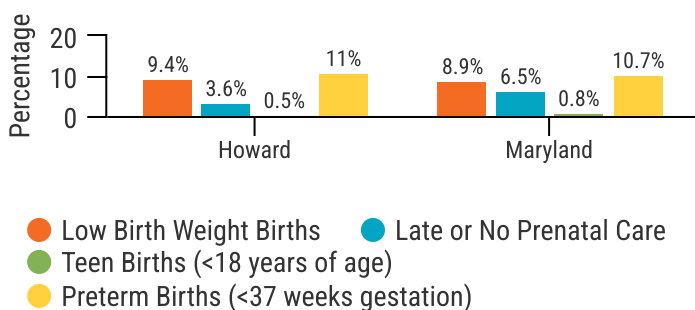
MATERNAL & INFANT HEALTH

Overall from 2012 to 2021, the number of births in Howard County has decreased by 5.4%. The number of births among White and Asian residents has declined, but has increased among Black and Hispanic residents. Infant mortality rates are highest among Black infants.

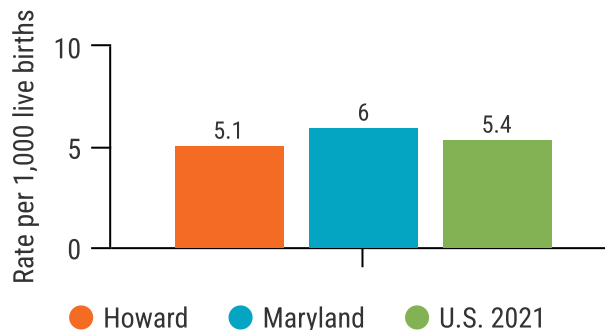
Early prenatal care and education are critical components for healthy pregnancy outcomes. Howard County Health Department's Perinatal Equity and Care for Everyone (P.E.A.C.E.) Project provides individuals with information about prenatal, postpartum and infant resources available in Howard County through care coordination services, community outreach and targeted education.



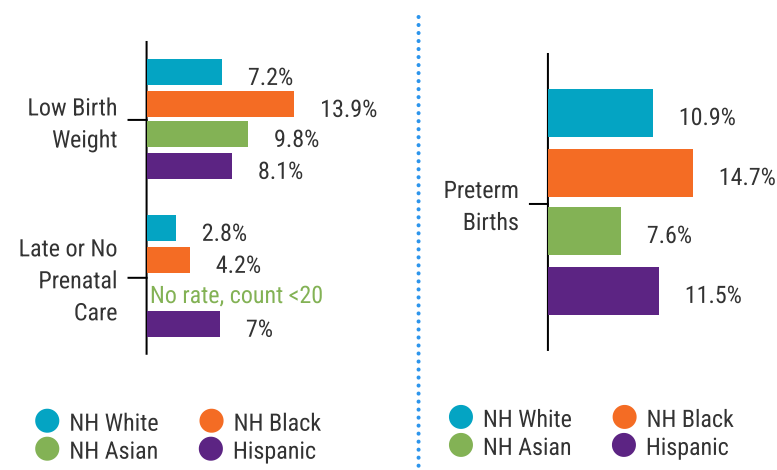
Selected Indicators, Howard, 2021



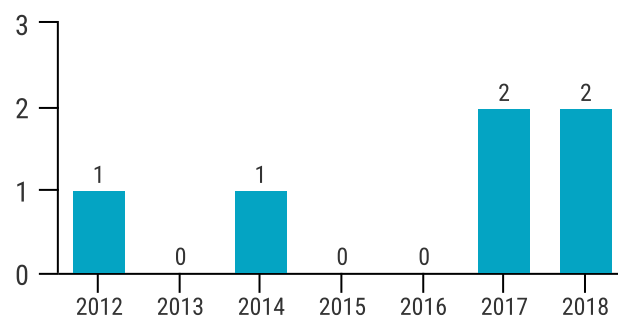
Infant Mortality Rates[^], 2017-2021



Racial Disparities^{**}, Howard County, 2021



Pregnancy-Associated Maternal Deaths^{*}



Data Source: Maryland Vital Statistics Administration; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

NH: Non-Hispanic; Low birth weight (<2500 grams); Late Prenatal Care refers to care beginning in the 3rd trimester; [^]Rate per 1,000 live births [12 infant deaths total in 2020]. ^{*}Deaths of women from any cause while pregnant or within 365 days of pregnancy (by jurisdiction of residence)

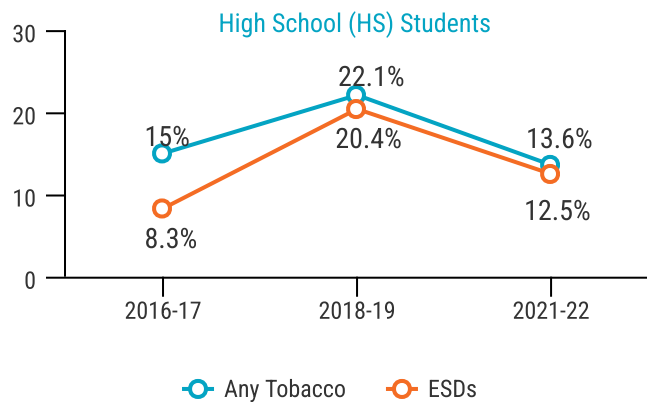
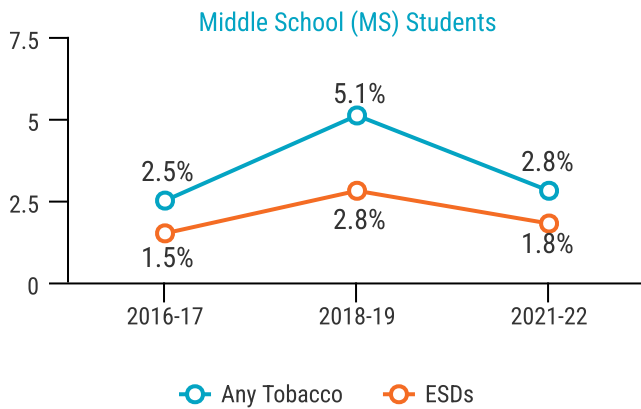
^{**}Percentages of live births in selected race/ethnicity

TOBACCO & E-CIGARETTE USE

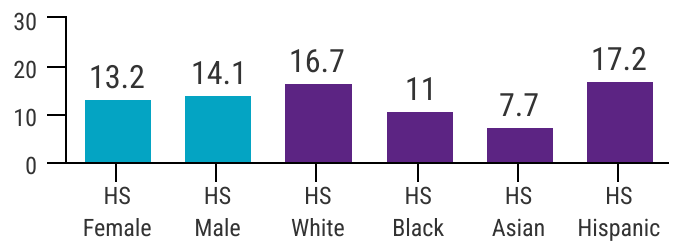
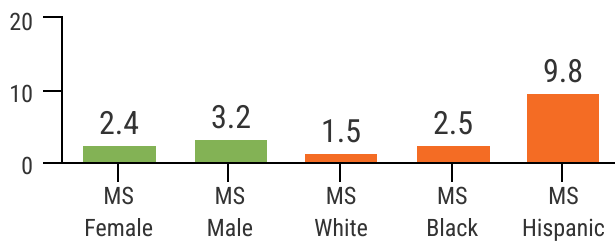
The use of tobacco/electronic smoking devices (ESDs) has decreased among middle school and high school students. The Howard County Health Department Tobacco Prevention and Control Program provides education and assistance to local individuals and groups regarding tobacco use, prevention and cessation. The Tobacco Enforcement Program educates retailers about tobacco sales to underage residents.

Youth

Percent Current Use of Tobacco/ESDs, Howard County

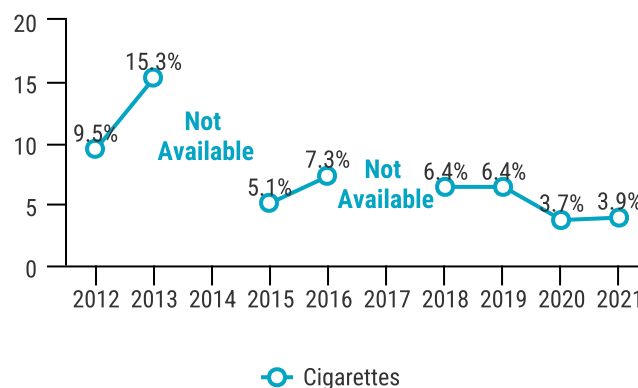


Percent Current Tobacco Use by Gender, Race and Ethnicity, Howard County 2021-2022



Adults

Percent Current Cigarette Use (age-adjusted rates)

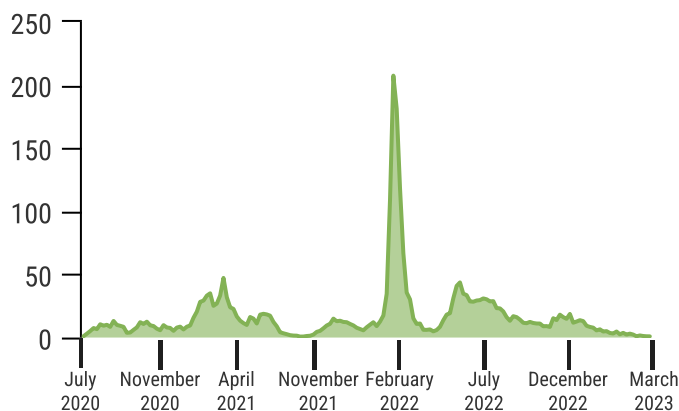


Data Source: Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey/Youth Tobacco Survey, Maryland Department of Health; Maryland BRFSS, Maryland Department of Health. *2020

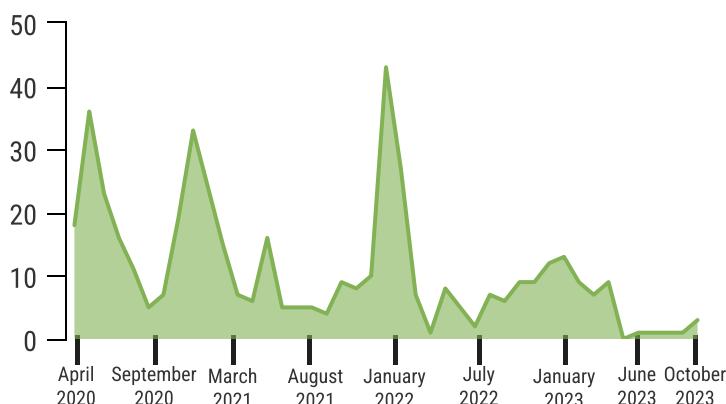
COVID-19

As of August 2023, there have been more than 65,000 cases of COVID-19 in Howard County, resulting in at least 469 deaths. Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines helps to lower the risk of illness, hospitalization, or death.

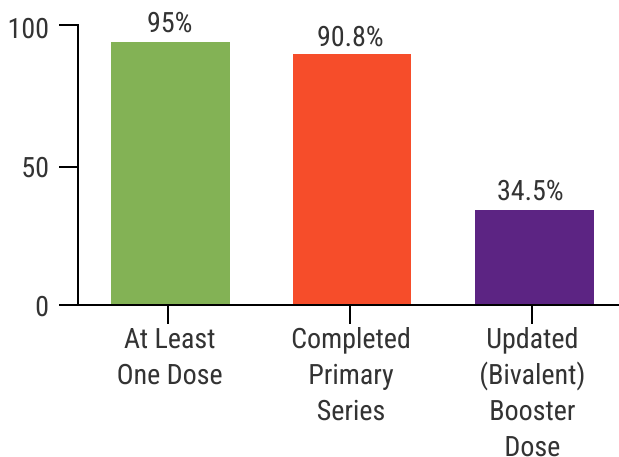
COVID-19 Reported 7-Day Average Case Rates per 100,000 population*



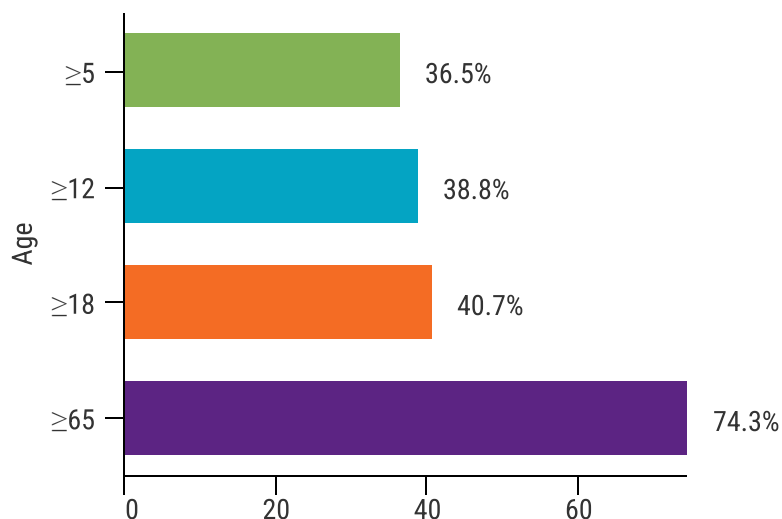
COVID-19 Confirmed Deaths^



Percent of Population Vaccinated**



Percent of Population Vaccinated by Age**



Data Source: Maryland Department of Health; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

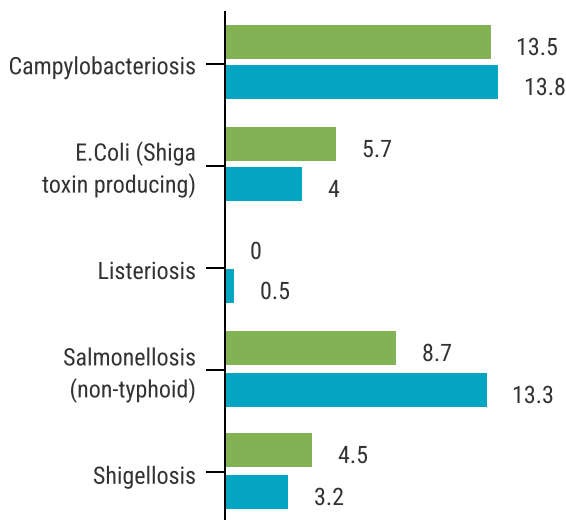
*By week ^By month **As of May 11, 2023

INFECTIOUS DISEASE REPORTING

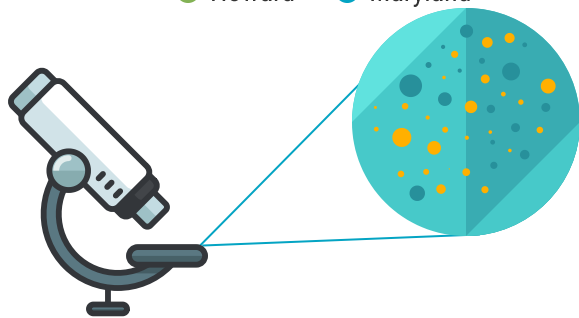
Campylobacteriosis was the most common reportable foodborne illness in Howard County. There are many ways to prevent foodborne illnesses, including washing hands often, avoiding cross-contamination, and correct food storage. Howard County Health Department's Food Protection Program conducts over 1,300 food inspections per year to ensure that all food service facilities offer food that is free from disease or contamination. The Tuberculosis (TB) Control Program aims to control the incidence of tuberculosis by providing screening, preventative treatment and case management for active TB cases in Howard County. Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne disease in Maryland and can be prevented by wearing repellent, checking for ticks, and showering after being outdoors. Howard County also provides rabies vaccination clinics to protect citizens and pets from rabies.

Selected Reportable Conditions

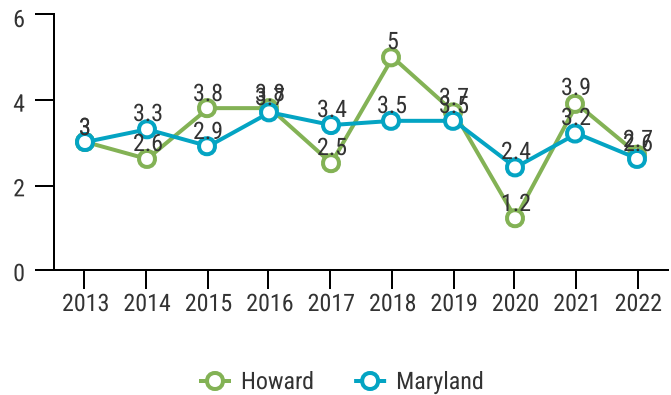
Reported Case Rates of Selected Foodborne Illness per 100,000 population, 2021



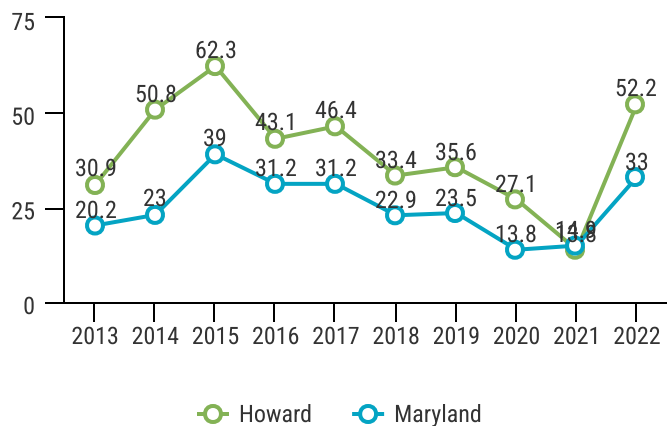
● Howard ● Maryland



Tuberculosis Reported Case Rates per 100,000 population



Lyme Disease Reported Case* Rates per 100,000 population



*Note: Case definition changes occurred in 1996, 2008, 2011, 2017.

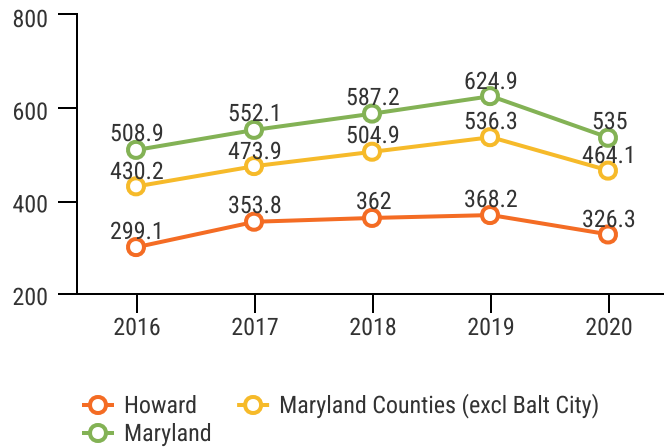
2021 Totals	5 <i>Animal Rabies</i>	1.49 <i>Animal Rabies Case Rate per 100,000 population</i>	619 <i>Number of cases investigated (reported incidents of human exposure to animals)</i>	322 <i>Number of animals vaccinated at Health Department sponsored clinics</i>
Goal: Maintain zero human rabies cases in Howard County.				

Data Source: Infectious Diseases Bureau, Maryland Department of Health; Howard County Health Department, Infection Control and Public Health Readiness Bureau

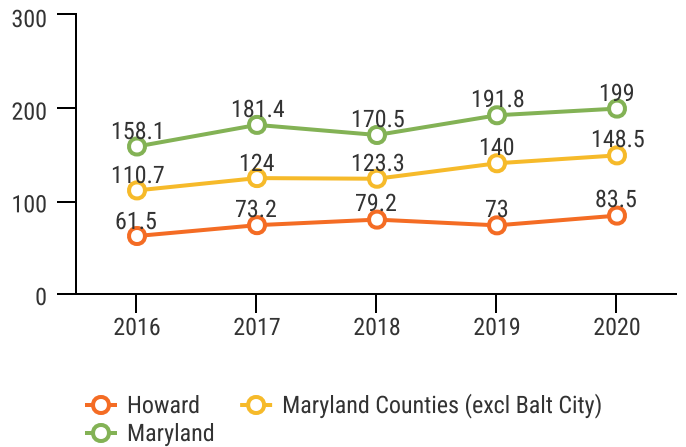
SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STI)

The rate of Chlamydia has decreased in Howard County while the rates of Gonorrhea and Syphilis increased. There were more reported Chlamydia cases in females and more reported Gonorrhea cases in males. Howard County Health Department provides STI education, screening, and treatment services for Howard County women, men, teens and LGBTQIA+ communities.

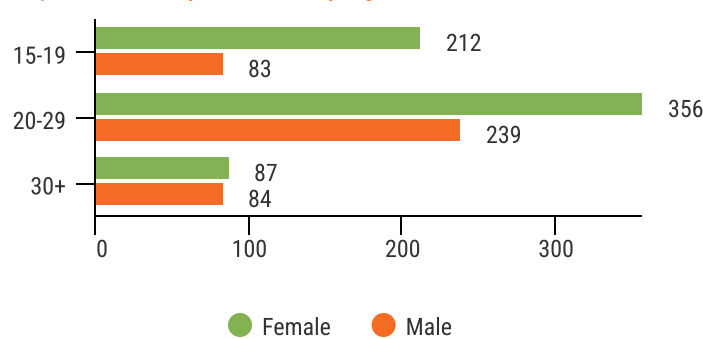
Chlamydia Reported Case Rates per 100,000 population



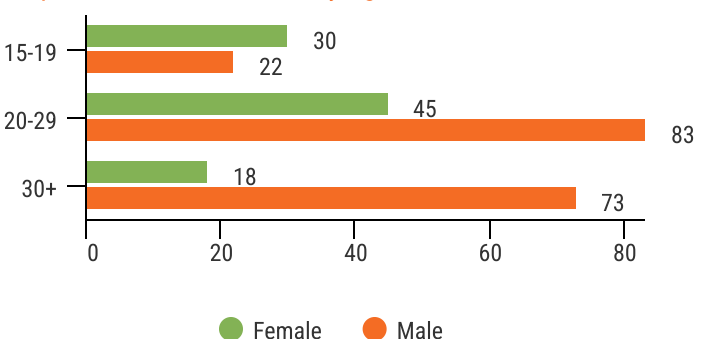
Gonorrhea Reported Case Rates per 100,000 population



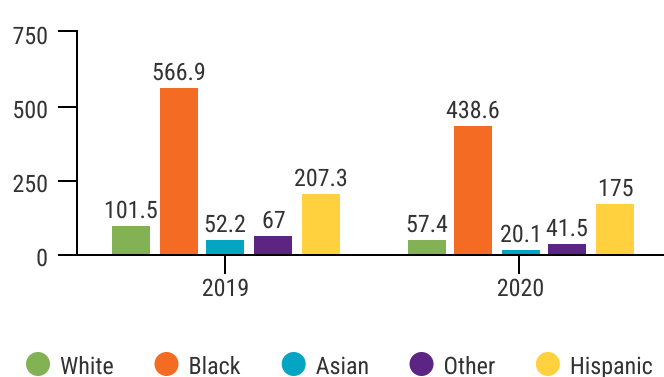
Reported Chlamydia Cases by Age, 2020



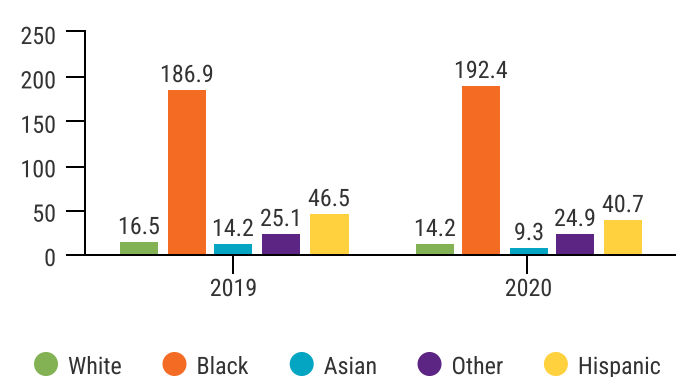
Reported Gonorrhea Cases by Age, 2020



Reported Chlamydia Case Rates by Race and Ethnicity, 2019-2020



Reported Gonorrhea Case Rates by Race and Ethnicity, 2019-2020



Syphilis* Case Rate in Howard County

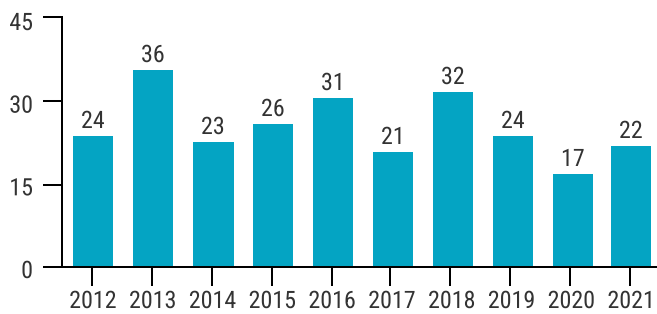
4.88 per 100,000 population in 2020 (compared to 1.36 in 2011)

Data Source: Center for STI Prevention, Maryland Department of Health. *Primary and Secondary

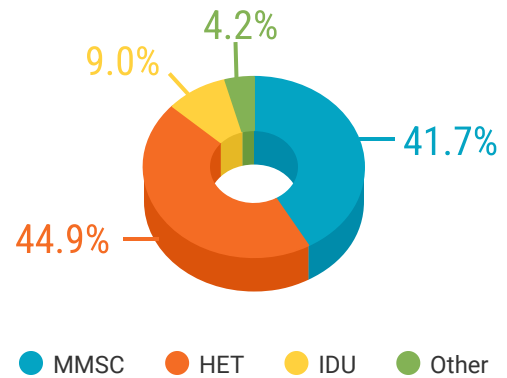
HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV)

HIV disproportionately affects Black individuals and males of all races/ethnicities. In Howard County, there were 22 new HIV diagnoses in 2021. The risk of getting HIV can be reduced by getting tested, using protection during intercourse, and safe injection drug use. The HIV-PrEP/STI Program provides anonymous and confidential HIV testing and counseling, as well as HIV Pre-Exposure Propylaxis (PrEP).

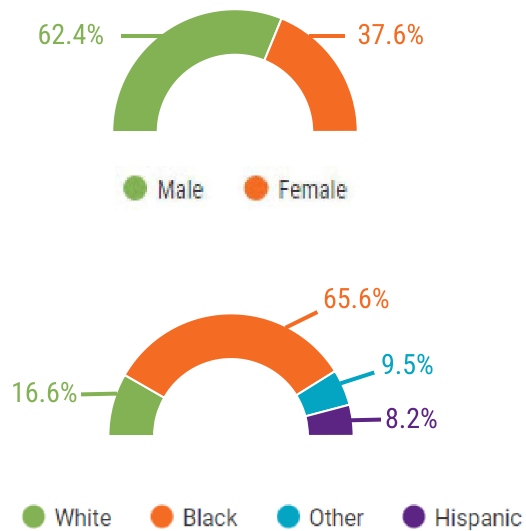
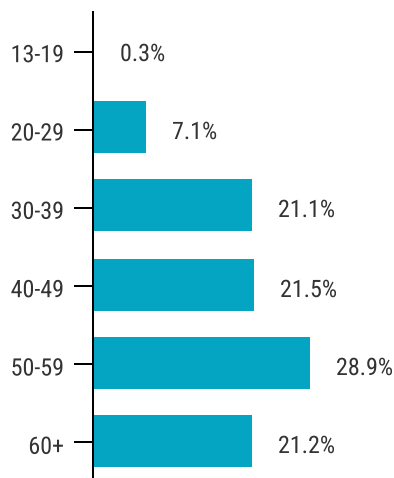
New HIV DIAGNOSES BY YEAR (Ages 13+) Howard County, 2012-2021



Exposure Category* for Living HIV Cases Howard County, 2021



Living Cases by Sex at Birth, Race/Ethnicity and Age




22

New HIV Diagnoses, 2021


745

People Living with HIV Diagnosis, 2021

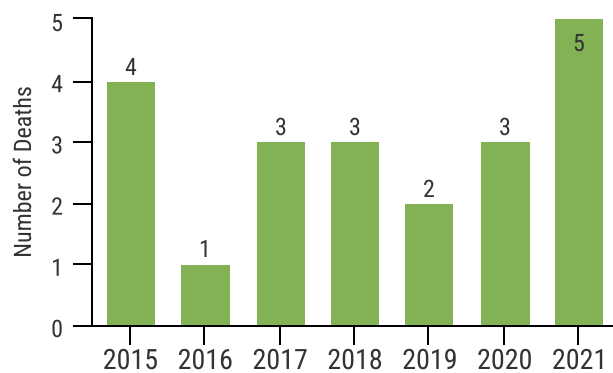
Data Source: Infectious Diseases Bureau, Maryland Department of Health.

*MMSC: Male-to-male Sexual Contact; HET: Heterosexual Contact; IDU: Injection Drug Use; Other: includes No identified risk.

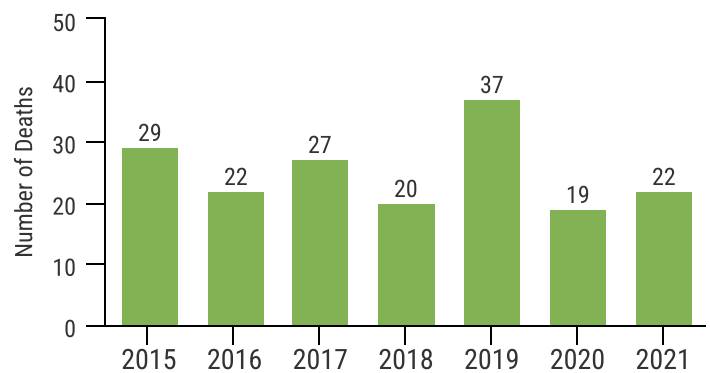
SUICIDE

Suicide was the second leading cause of death for youth ages 15-19 in Howard County between 2019-2020. Research suggests gender disparities in rates of suicide and suicidal ideation. While females are more likely to consider suicide, males are more likely to die by suicide. Howard County Health Department's "It's OK To Ask" suicide prevention program aims to raise awareness and reduce the stigma associated with suicide and mental health across the lifespan. The Behavioral Health Navigator links persons in need of support to a wide variety of services in the County and Immigrant Services provide culturally appropriate connections. Specialized youth services offer peer support, referrals, and other resources including Sources of Strength and school-based programs.

Suicide Deaths Among Adolescents Ages 10-19 Years, Howard County (2015-2021)



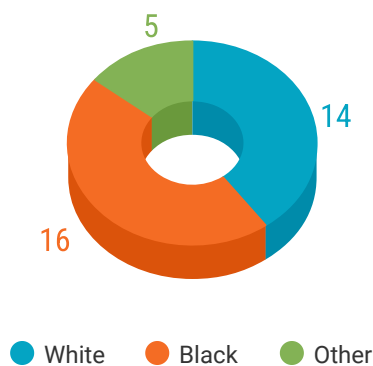
Suicide Deaths Among All Ages, Howard County (2015-2021)



Black youth account for

46% Suicide deaths in 12-year period vs **25%** Population ages 10-19

Suicide Deaths Ages 10-19, Howard County, 2009-2020



1 in 5 middle school students seriously considered attempting suicide



21.9%

2 in 5 adults had at least one bad mental health day in the past 30 days



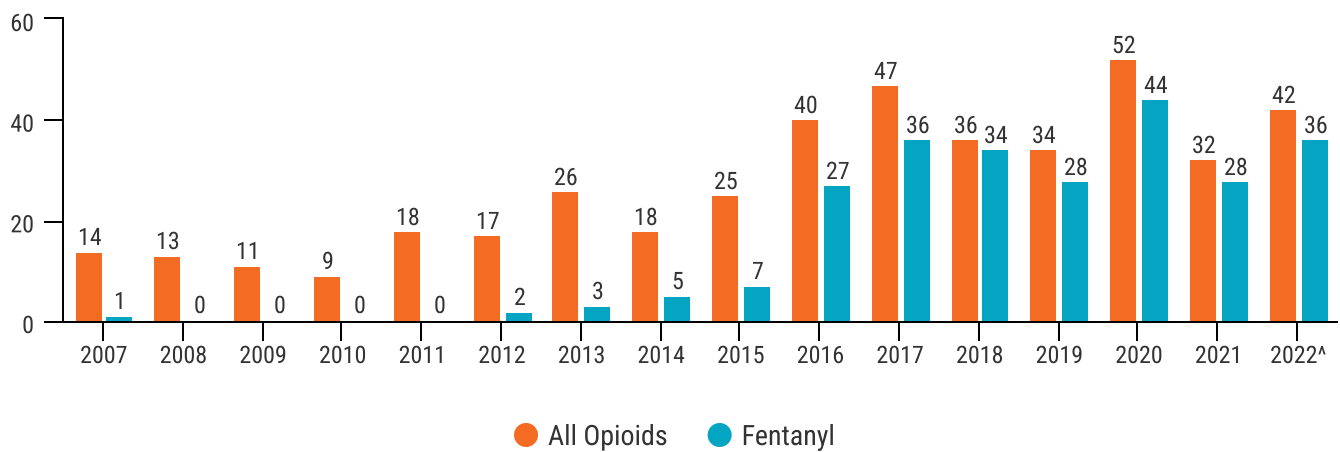
40.1%

Data Source: 2021-2022 Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Maryland Department of Health; Maryland Vital Statistics Administration; Maryland BRFSS accessed 19Oct2023

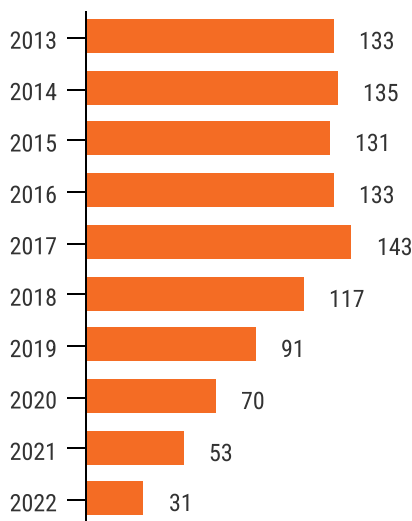
OPIOID OVERDOSES

After a steady rise in opioid-related overdose deaths in Howard County, the rate of opioid-related overdose deaths appears to have slowed. Increased access to Naloxone (opioid overdose reversal drug), safer prescribing practices, access to treatment, education, and risk reduction outreach activities have improved outcomes, ultimately saving lives. Howard County Health Department's Opioid Overdose Response Program (ORP) leads and coordinates Naloxone trainings, conducts community outreach efforts, and provides overdose prevention strategies and support. The Harm Reduction Program and Peer Support Services Team meet people where they are in communities. They offer support to be safe and receive help when people are ready.

Number of Unintentional Opioid-related Intoxication Deaths, Howard County, CY 2007-2022^A



Number of Non-fatal Opioid-related Overdose Hospital Events CY*



Opioid Response Program (ORP) Activities Howard County Health Department

	FY22	FY23
ORP Trainings	73	118
ORP People Trained	1432	2069
# of People Provided Naloxone	1165	1965
# of Naloxone Kits Distributed	1280	2179

Data Source: Maryland Vital Statistics Administration; CRISP Reporting Services; Howard County Health Department.

*Preliminary data, HSCRC Casemix data includes inpatient discharges and outpatient hospital visits at MD acute care hospitals with an overdose ICD9/10 code in any diagnosis position; intentionality listed as unintentional or undetermined, CRISP Reporting Services.

CY: Calendar Year; FY: Fiscal Year. ^APreliminary.

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

The Howard County Health Department uses key indicators to remain aware of the County’s health in our commitment to continued community well-being. Monitoring these indicators enables us to understand fundamental health trends, proactively address strategic changes, and enhance our responsiveness to evolving community health needs.

Howard County Key Indicators



Most recent data available.

Data Source: *Maryland Vital Statistics Administration, 2021; ***2017-2021; ****2019-2021; ^Howard County Health Assessment Survey; **Maryland BRFSS 2021, accessed 8Aug23; Maryland YRBS, 2021.

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