

Notice of Error in the 2003 and 2004 Fetal Death Data Files and Reports, and Instructions for Correcting the Data File Error

Due to a programming error, the Tabulation Flag variable located in position 9 is incorrect in the 2003 and 2004 fetal death data files. This variable identifies fetal deaths of stated or presumed period of gestation of either <20 weeks, or 20 weeks or more. Most tabulations and reports of fetal death data include only fetal deaths of 20 weeks of gestation or more. Due to this error, some fetal death records with not stated gestational ages that should have been included in the 20 weeks or more group were erroneously assigned to the <20 week group. This led to a slight underestimate of fetal mortality rates published in the National Vital Statistics Reports: *Fetal and Perinatal Mortality, United States, 2003* and *Fetal and Perinatal Mortality, United States, 2004*. The documentation tables published in the Fetal Death User's Guides for 2003 and 2004 are also incorrect. Tables 1 and 2 below show the effect of correcting this error on fetal and perinatal mortality rates. It should be emphasized that although the corrected rates are a bit different from those originally published, they are not *statistically* different in that the statements about statistical significance or lack thereof made in the fetal and perinatal reports for 2003-2005 did not change. In other words, the US fetal mortality rate did not decline significantly from 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05, or 2003-05. There was a significant decline in the fetal mortality rate from 2002-04 and 2002-05. In the vast majority of the states, the corrected numbers differed from the originally reported numbers by less than 1.0 percent in each year (Tables 2 and 3).

When using the 2003 and 2004 fetal mortality data file, the data user can easily correct for this problem by adding the following SAS code to their program:

```
DATA work;
  INFILE 'C:FET04US.DAT' LRECL=3350;
  INPUT
    TABFLAG 9
    XOSTATE $32-33
    COMBGEST 451-452;

  IF COMBGEST=99 and XOSTATE IN ('AL', 'AK', 'AZ', 'CA', 'CT', 'DE', 'DC', 'FL', 'ID',
    'IL', 'IN', 'IA', 'KS', 'KY', 'LA', 'ME', 'MD', 'MA', 'MI', 'MN', 'MS', 'MO', 'MT', 'NE', 'NV',
    'NH', 'NJ', 'NM', 'NC', 'ND', 'OH', 'OK', 'OR', 'SC', 'SD', 'TN', 'TX', 'UT', 'VT', 'WA',
    'WI', 'WV', 'WY') THEN TABFLG=2;
```

In this statement, COMBGEST in the Gestation – Detail in Weeks, XOSTATE is the Expanded State of Occurrence, and TABFLAG is the Tabulation Flag variable.

The 2003 and 2004 Fetal death data available through VitalStats (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/VitalStats.htm>) have been corrected, and can be used to provide control totals to verify your programming.

Table 1. Corrected fetal and perinatal deaths and mortality rates, United States, 2003 and 2004

	2003		2004	
	Corrected	Originally reported	Corrected	Originally reported
Number of fetal deaths ¹				
Total	26,004	25,653	26,001	25,655
20-27 weeks ²	13,348	13,168	13,068	12,894
28 weeks or more ²	12,656	12,485	12,933	12,761
Fetal mortality rate ³				
Total	6.32	6.23	6.28	6.20
20-27 weeks ²	3.25	3.21	3.17	3.13
28 weeks or more ²	3.08	3.04	3.14	3.09
Number of perinatal deaths				
Definition I ⁴	27,808	27,637	27,769	27,597
Definition II ⁵	44,939	44,588	44,603	44,257
Perinatal mortality rate ³				
Definition I ⁴	6.78	6.74	6.73	6.69
Definition II ⁵	10.92	10.83	10.78	10.70

1 Fetal deaths with stated or presumed period of gestation of 20 weeks or more.

2 Fetal deaths with not stated gestational age are proportionally distributed.

3 Rate per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths in specified group.

4 Infant deaths of less than 7 days and fetal deaths with stated or presumed period of gestation of 28 weeks or more.

5 Infant deaths of less than 28 days and fetal deaths with stated or presumed period of gestation of 20 weeks or more.

Table 2. Corrected fetal deaths and mortality rates: United States and each state, 2003

2004	Number of fetal deaths ¹			Fetal mortality rates ²		
	Corrected	Originally reported	Births	Corrected	Originally reported	Percent difference
United States	26,004	25,653	4,090,007	6.32	6.23	1.4
Alabama	519	516	59,552	8.64	8.59	0.6
Alaska	65	60	10,086	6.40	5.91	8.3
Arizona	570	568	90,967	6.23	6.21	0.3
Arkansas	259	259	37,784	6.81	6.81	0.0
California	2,974	2,862	540,997	5.47	5.26	3.9
Colorado	394	394	69,339	5.65	5.65	0.0
Connecticut	241	241	42,873	5.59	5.59	0.0
Delaware	63	63	11,329	5.53	5.53	0.0
District of Columbia	68	65	7,619	8.85	8.46	4.6
Florida	1,562	1,549	212,250	7.31	7.25	0.8
Georgia	1,138	1,138	135,980	8.30	8.30	0.0
Hawaii	131	131	18,100	7.19	7.19	-0.1
Idaho	113	113	21,800	5.16	5.16	-0.1
Illinois	1,158	1,148	182,495	6.31	6.25	0.9
Indiana	507	496	86,434	5.83	5.71	2.1
Iowa	201	201	38,174	5.24	5.24	0.0
Kansas	208	208	39,476	5.24	5.24	0.0
Kentucky	339	338	55,238	6.10	6.08	0.3
Louisiana	479	463	65,047	7.31	7.07	3.4
Maine	50	50	13,855	3.60	3.60	-0.1
Maryland	629	629	74,930	8.32	8.32	0.1
Massachusetts	457	457	80,184	5.67	5.67	-0.1
Michigan	731	730	131,100	5.54	5.54	0.1
Minnesota	337	337	70,050	4.79	4.79	0.0
Mississippi	404	403	42,380	9.44	9.42	0.2
Missouri	488	488	77,045	6.29	6.29	0.1
Montana	55	55	11,422	4.79	4.79	0.0
Nebraska	151	151	25,917	5.79	5.79	0.0
Nevada	242	239	33,647	7.14	7.05	1.3
New Hampshire	68	68	14,393	4.70	4.70	0.0
New Jersey	769	768	116,984	6.54	6.52	0.3
New Mexico ³	87	85	27,822	3.12	3.05	2.2
New York	2,146	2,146	253,714	8.39	8.39	0.0
North Carolina	843	832	118,323	7.07	6.98	1.3
North Dakota	41	41	7,972	5.12	5.12	-0.1
Ohio	937	929	149,691	6.22	6.17	0.8
Oklahoma	323	247	50,988	6.29	4.82	30.6
Oregon	204	203	45,953	4.42	4.40	0.4
Pennsylvania	956	956	145,960	6.51	6.51	0.0

Rhode Island	52	52	13,209	3.92	3.92	0.0
South Carolina	519	517	55,649	9.24	9.20	0.4
South Dakota ³	40	39	11,027	3.61	3.52	2.7
Tennessee ³	373	373	78,890	4.71	4.71	-0.1
Texas	2,124	2,063	377,495	5.60	5.44	2.9
Utah	241	241	49,860	4.81	4.81	0.0
Vermont	21	21	6,589	3.18	3.18	-0.1
Virginia	687	687	101,254	6.74	6.74	0.0
Washington	509	503	80,489	6.28	6.21	1.2
West Virginia	144	143	20,935	6.83	6.78	0.8
Wisconsin	356	356	70,040	5.06	5.06	-0.1
Wyoming	31	31	6,700	4.61	4.61	-0.1

¹Fetal deaths with stated or presumed gestation of 20 weeks or more.

²Rate per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths in specified group.

³State reports only fetal deaths of 500 grams or more; data for fetal deaths and rates are not comparable to data from other states.

Table 3. Corrected fetal deaths and mortality rates: United States, each state, 2004

2004	Number of fetal deaths ¹			Fetal mortality rates ²		
	Corrected	Originally reported	Births	Corrected	Originally reported	Percent difference
United States	26,001	25,655	4,112,055	6.28	6.20	1.3
Alabama	537	536	59,510	8.94	8.93	0.1
Alaska	54	53	10,338	5.20	5.10	1.9
Arizona	553	548	93,663	5.87	5.82	0.9
Arkansas	281	281	38,573	7.23	7.23	0.0
California	2,927	2,819	544,844	5.34	5.15	3.8
Colorado	388	388	68,503	5.63	5.63	0.0
Connecticut	254	254	42,095	6.00	6.00	0.0
Delaware	49	49	11,369	4.29	4.29	0.0
District of Columbia	59	59	7,933	7.38	7.38	0.0
Florida	1,669	1,649	218,053	7.60	7.51	1.1
Georgia	1,175	1,175	138,849	8.39	8.39	0.0
Hawaii	97	97	18,281	5.28	5.28	0.0
Idaho	129	129	22,532	5.69	5.69	0.0
Illinois	1,120	1,117	180,778	6.16	6.14	0.3
Indiana	531	523	87,142	6.06	5.97	1.5
Iowa	216	215	38,438	5.59	5.56	0.5
Kansas	194	193	39,669	4.87	4.84	0.6
Kentucky	362	361	55,720	6.45	6.44	0.2
Louisiana	486	459	65,370	7.38	6.97	5.9
Maine	67	67	13,944	4.78	4.78	0.0
Maryland	593	592	74,628	7.88	7.87	0.2
Massachusetts	421	420	78,484	5.34	5.32	0.3
Michigan	745	745	129,776	5.71	5.71	0.0
Minnesota	364	363	70,624	5.13	5.11	0.3
Mississippi	403	401	42,827	9.32	9.28	0.5
Missouri	463	463	77,765	5.92	5.92	0.0
Montana	42	42	11,519	3.63	3.63	0.1
Nebraska	163	163	26,332	6.15	6.15	0.0
Nevada	256	256	35,200	7.22	7.22	0.0
New Hampshire	67	67	14,565	4.58	4.58	0.0
New Jersey	753	751	115,253	6.49	6.47	0.3
New Mexico ³	87	87	28,384	3.06	3.06	-0.1
New York	2,109	2,109	249,947	8.37	8.37	0.0
North Carolina	809	798	119,847	6.71	6.61	1.4
North Dakota	37	37	8,189	4.50	4.50	0.0
Ohio	978	970	148,955	6.52	6.47	0.8
Oklahoma	320	255	51,306	6.20	4.95	25.2
Oregon	196	195	45,678	4.27	4.25	0.5
Pennsylvania	903	903	144,748	6.20	6.20	0.0

Rhode Island	67	67	12,779	5.22	5.22	-0.1
South Carolina	479	479	56,590	8.39	8.39	0.0
South Dakota ³	37	37	11,338	3.25	3.25	0.1
Tennessee ³	384	384	79,642	4.80	4.80	0.0
Texas	2,139	2,070	381,293	5.58	5.40	3.3
Utah	281	279	50,670	5.52	5.48	0.6
Vermont	29	29	6,599	4.38	4.38	-0.1
Virginia	725	725	103,933	6.93	6.93	0.0
Washington	437	433	81,747	5.32	5.27	0.9
West Virginia	146	146	20,880	6.94	6.94	0.1
Wisconsin	362	359	70,146	5.13	5.09	0.9
Wyoming	58	58	6,807	8.45	8.45	0.0

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