



NORTHERN
REGIONAL HOSPITAL

MATERNAL WARNING SIGNS & THE “I GAVE BIRTH” INITIATIVE

KNOW YOUR ROLE IN PROTECTING
OUR POSTPARTUM POPULATION

THE “I GAVE BIRTH” INITIATIVE

This program is active in YOUR community:

GU1

1. Birthing people receive a teal bracelet and education about the POST-BIRTH Warning Signs when they leave the hospital; they are encouraged to wear the bracelet until their 6-week postpartum visit.
 - a. These bracelets are a reminder to the birthing person, their families, communities, healthcare providers, and EMS teams. They remind all of us to speak up, listen, and act if a person begins to have symptoms.
 - b. While the bracelets are offered to all patients who give birth after 20 weeks, it’s crucial to remember that not everyone will wear them.
 - c. **Additionally, a person may wear this bracelet after experiencing an infant loss; this bracelet does not always invite a “Congratulations.”**
2. We’ve shared this education and resources community-wide across many healthcare arenas. Together, we can improve the timeliness and quality of care for people experiencing postpartum emergencies.



The most common causes of maternal mortality and morbidity include:

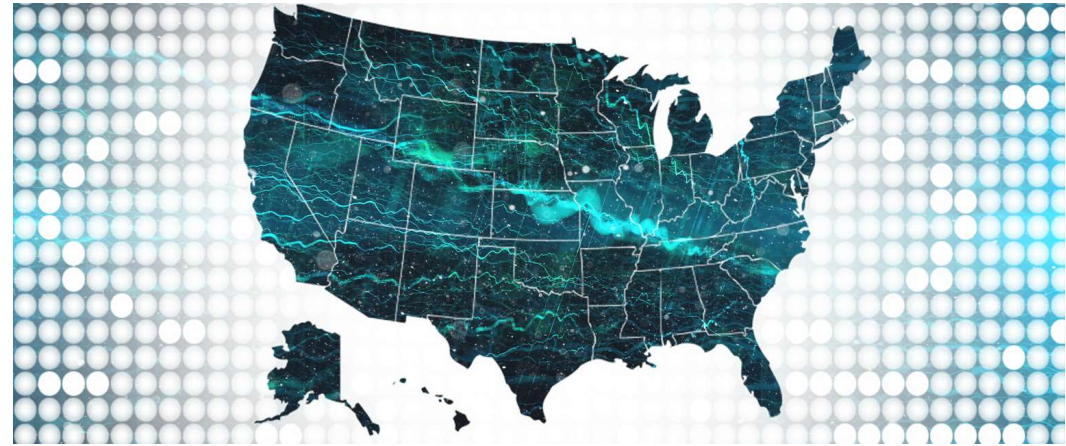
- Hemorrhage
- Cardiac conditions
- Sepsis
- Hypertension disorders of pregnancy
- Pulmonary conditions
- Clotting disorders
- Substance Use and Mental Health Issues

MATERNAL MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY DATA: THE WHY

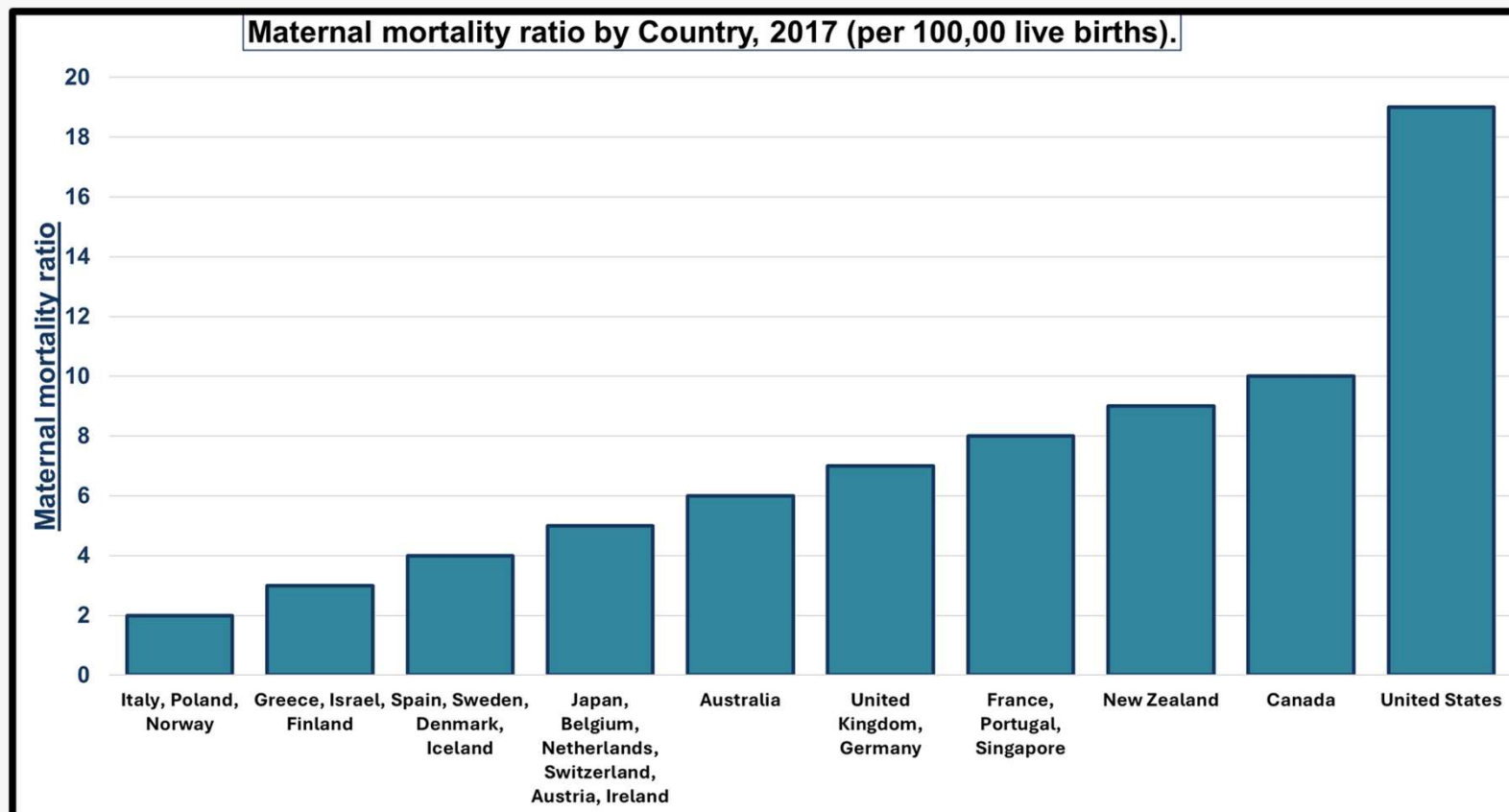


THE DATA IS STARK

- Maternal Mortality is much higher in the U.S. than in most industrialized countries.¹
- ****This rate more than doubled from 1990 through 2020 (10.0 vs 23.8 per 100,000 births), and the 2021 maternal mortality rate was 32.9!**^{2,3}
- More than half of pregnancy-related deaths occur during the postpartum period, even though pregnancy and birth may be perceived as riskier.⁹
- Some populations bear far heavier burdens surrounding severe maternal morbidities and death related to their pregnancies.²
 - Black birthing people are almost 3x as likely to die as White birthing people.²
 - American Indian/Alaskan Native birthing people are twice as likely to die than White birthing people.²
 - **Rural birthing populations are 1.5 times more likely to die than urban birthing populations.**²



U.S. Maternal Mortality Rates are higher than ANY other developed country!





Additionally, Severe Maternal Morbidities (SMM) are serious complications resulting in poor health and other consequences like:

- An inability to care for self and family
- Ineffective bonding with the infant
- Breastfeeding success
- Family well-being



These rates have steadily increased since the 1990s, climbing 29% in North Carolina since 2017!



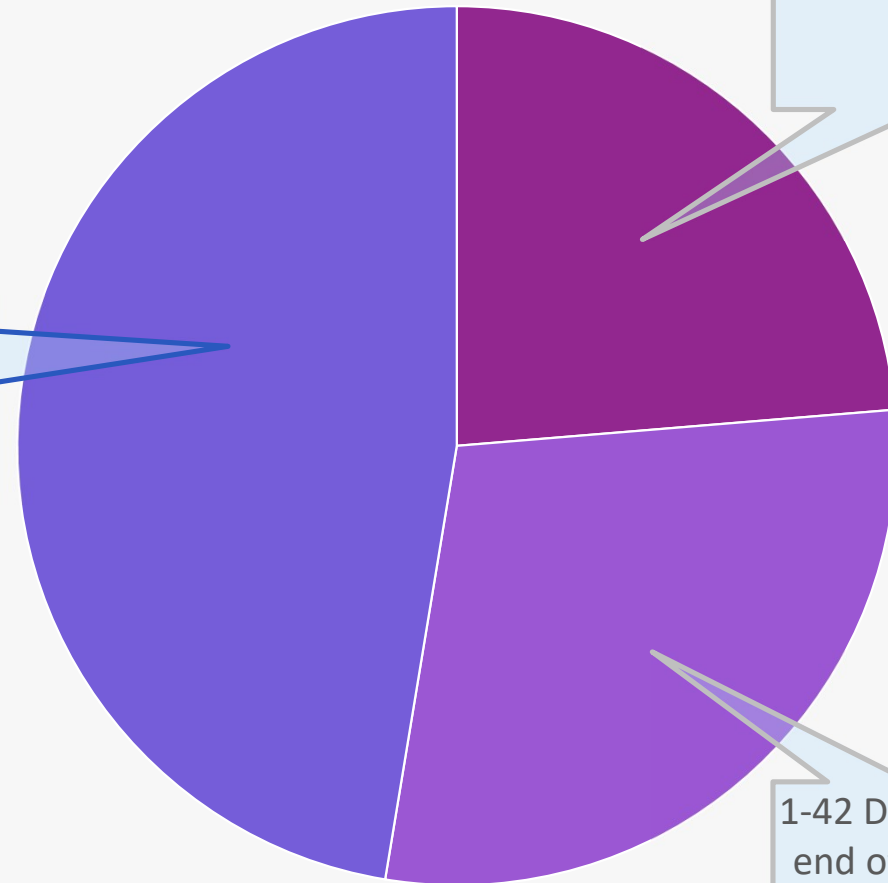
Timing of Pregnancy Related Deaths

Nearly one half of the maternal deaths occur after the 6-week Postpartum Visit.

43 days to 1 year
after the end of
pregnancy
47%

Pregnant at the Time
of death or Day of
delivery
24%

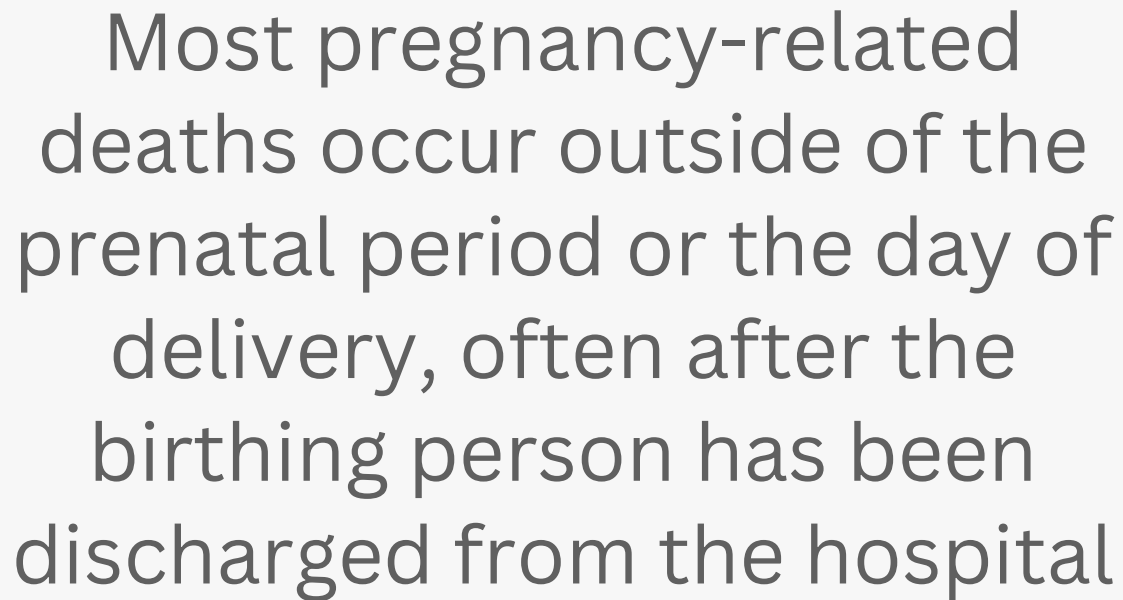
1-42 Days after the
end of pregnancy
29%



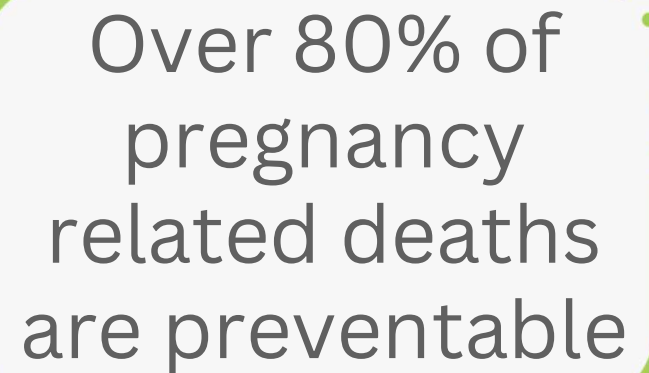
(NC MMRC, 2024)



Link to the North Carolina
Maternal Mortality Review
Committee Report



Most pregnancy-related deaths occur outside of the prenatal period or the day of delivery, often after the birthing person has been discharged from the hospital



Over 80% of pregnancy related deaths are preventable

Let's discuss the Maternal Warning Signs (aka POST-BIRTH Warning Signs) and the steps to take if a person experiences them.



POST-BIRTH WARNING SIGNS

- A feeling of tightness or pressure in the center of the chest
- Pain that travels to the back, neck, or arm
- A fast heartbeat or a pounding in the chest
- An irregular heart rate or skipped heartbeats



Pain in Chest

CMQCCs Improving Health Care Response to Cardiovascular Disease in Pregnancy and Postpartum:

<https://www.cmqcc.org/resources-toolkits/toolkits/improving-health-care-response-cardiovascular-disease-pregnancy-and>



POST-BIRTH WARNING SIGNS

- Sudden shortness of breath
- Throat and/or chest tightness
- Difficulty taking a deep breath
- Trouble breathing when lying flat
- Trouble catching their breath (talking and breathing are difficult)



**Obstructed
Breathing/Shortness
of Breath**

POST-BIRTH WARNING SIGNS

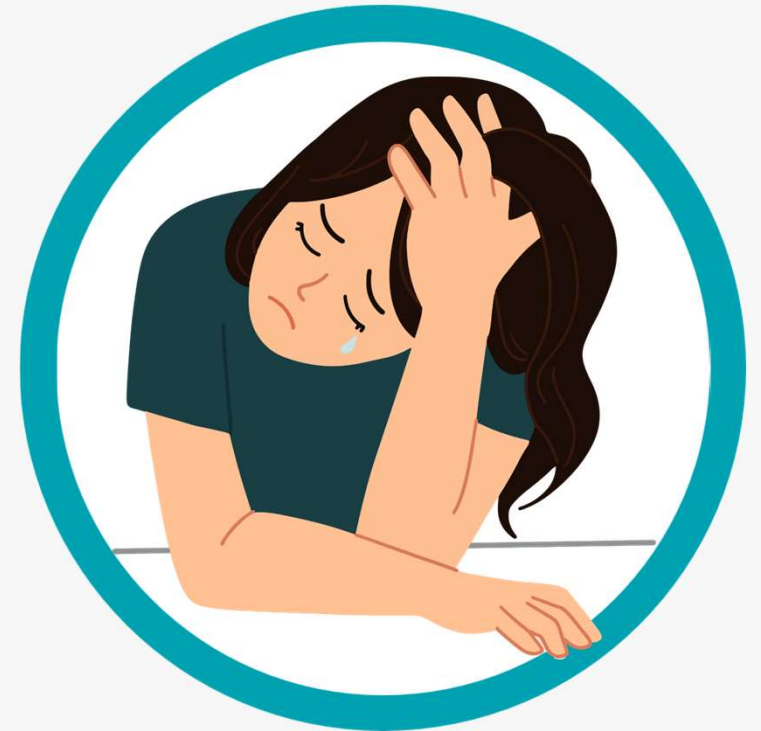
- Seizure(s)
- Dizziness and/or lightheadedness that's ongoing or comes and goes over many days
- Loss of consciousness
- A gap in time in which the patient has no memory



**Seizures, Dizziness,
or Fainting**

POST-BIRTH WARNING SIGNS

- Insomnia and Irritability
- Feel extremely worried all the time
- Hallucinations or delusions



Thoughts of hurting themselves, their baby, or someone else

POST-BIRTH WARNING SIGNS

- A sharp, stabbing, or cramp-like belly pain that doesn't go away
- The belly pain starts suddenly, is severe, or gets worse over time
- The incision is not healing, or the bleeding has a foul odor



Bleeding soaking through one pad per hour or passing clots the size of an egg

The Incision is not healing

POST-BIRTH WARNING SIGNS

- Swelling, pain, or tenderness, usually in the calf
- The area may also be red, swollen, and warm to the touch
- It may or may not hurt when touched
- It may hurt when flexing the foot, standing, or walking



Redness, swelling, or pain in the leg

POST-BIRTH WARNING SIGNS

Temperature of $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ or $\leq 96.8^{\circ}\text{F}$



Temperature

POST-BIRTH WARNING SIGNS

- Feels like the worst headache of their life
- It may start slowly or suddenly, like a clap of thunder
- Lasts even after treatment with medication and fluid intake
- Comes with changes in vision or dizziness
 - Flashes of light, bright or blind spots, or seeing double



Headaches that do not go away