

Maternal and Infant Health

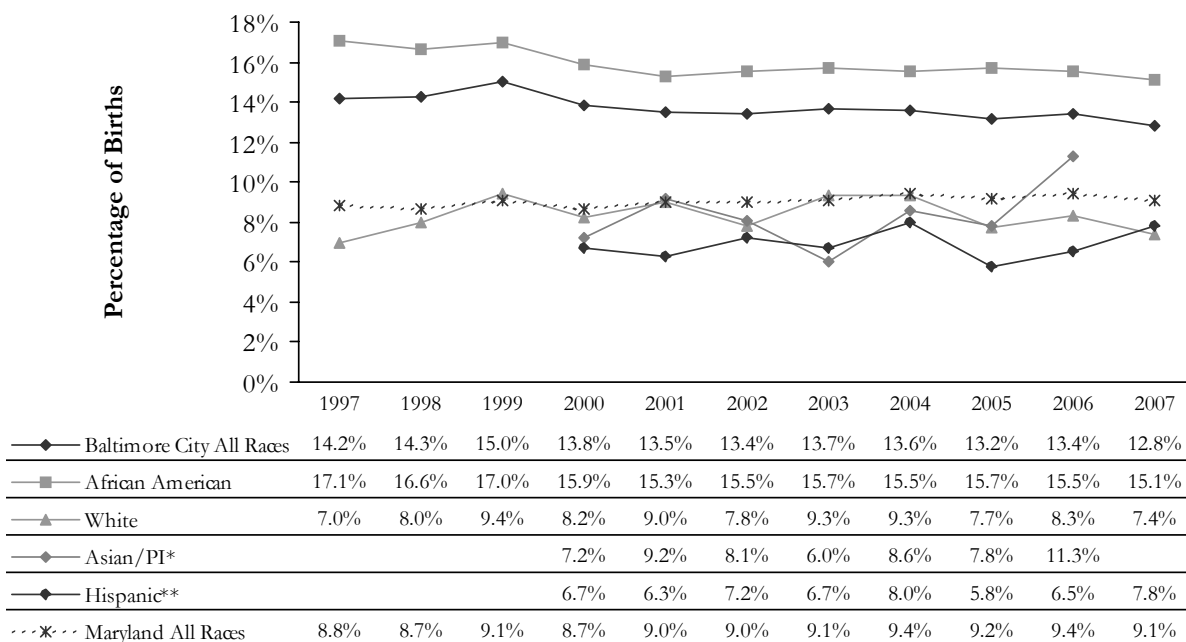
Low Birth Weight

Low Birth Weight: Babies weighing less than 2,500 grams (approximately 5.5 pounds) at birth

Importance: Birth weight is the most important factor affecting neonatal mortality and is a significant determinant of post-neonatal mortality; with a low birth weight, babies are at higher risk for developmental disabilities and respiratory problems.

National statistic: In 2005, 8.2% of babies of low birth weight Healthy People 2010 goal: 5.0%

Percentage of Low Birth Weight Births, Baltimore City by Race and Maryland 1997-2007



Source: Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Maryland Annual Vital Statistics Report (2007 data are preliminary).

*Asian and Pacific Islander, data not available prior to 2000 (data not yet available for 2007).

**Includes all births to mothers of Hispanic origin of any race, data not available prior to 2000.

- Over the past decade, the percentage of low birth weight births has decreased by almost 10% in Baltimore City (from 14.2% in 1997 to 12.8% in 2007). In contrast, in Maryland the percentage of low birth weight births has increased by 3% during this time period (from 8.8% in 1997 to 9.1% in 2007). Despite these trends, Baltimore babies are 30% more likely to be low birth weight than Maryland babies.
- In 2007, African American mothers in Baltimore City were almost twice as likely to have a low birth weight baby compared to white mothers.
- On average, Hispanic mothers in Baltimore City were half as likely to have a baby of low birth weight from 2000 to 2007 compared to mothers of all races and ethnicities.