

Andalusia Health

Covington County, Alabama Cardiovascular Disease Community Health Assessment

June 30, 2022

Based on the Covington County, Alabama Cardiovascular Disease Community Health Assessment data:

Cardiovascular disease is currently the eighth greatest health indicator is Alabamians, which is an improvement from 2019 when it was fifth.

Due to lack of available screenings and health services, heart disease is often diagnosed when serious health consequences have already begun. Many people have hypertension or high cholesterol but are unaware of symptoms and future diagnosis. Heart disease can be treated with changes in diet and exercise if the condition is detected in its early stages. It is especially prevalent in rural areas.

Cardiovascular disease is highly related, or at an increased risk with obesity, lack of exercise, and smoking.

Indicator data was collected from Blue Cross Blue Shield of AL (BCBS)

Claims, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, AL Medicaid Agency, BRFSS, and the ADPH Center for Health Statistics Mortality Files:

- AL's stroke mortality rate was 64.0 deaths per 100,000 persons in 2019.
- Shelby County, located in the Northeastern Public Health District, had the highest stroke rate with 142.1 deaths per 100,000 persons.
- According to BRFSS data, hypertension diagnosis is higher in populations with low income and low education attainment.

Alabama Cardiovascular Disease Highlights

In 2021, Alabama had 13,445 deaths per year related to heart disease being the cause of death, which ranked AL 4th in the nation in comparison to 2017 with 13,110 dying of the disease. According to ADPH, in 2019, there was an average of 36.8 deaths due to heart disease in Alabama. According to 2020 data from the CDC, Alabama's rate of adult obesity is 39%, which places the state in the third highest position in the nation. Alabama's adult obesity rate is up from 36.1% in 2019 and up from 22.6% in 2000.

Cardiovascular disease is inversely related to income and education. Cardiovascular disease risk increases dramatically with age. Poor diets, high in fats and processed sugars, and lack of exercise are risk factors for cardiovascular diseases. Smoking also increased the risk of heart disease.

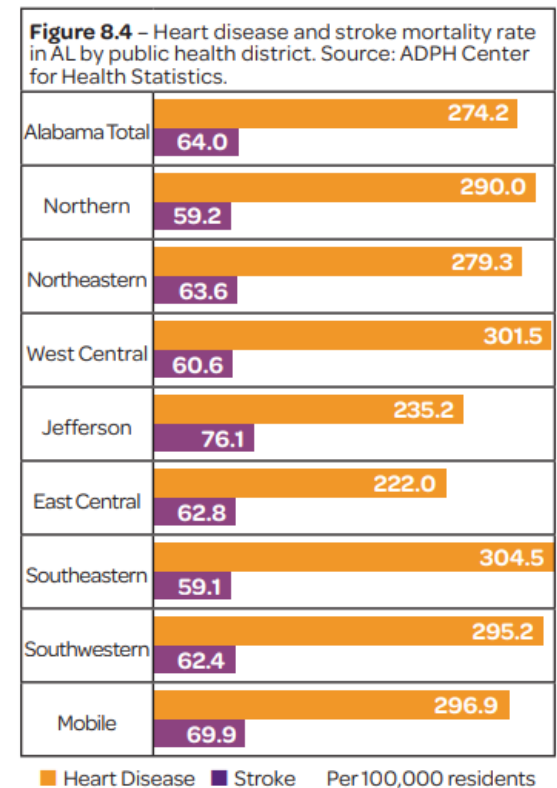


The statewide prevalence for adults who have been told they have high blood pressure was 10.2 percent higher than the national median:

- The risk of being diagnosed with hypertension increases with age. Two-thirds of individuals over 65 years old have been told they have high blood pressure.
- According to BRFSS data, males have a similar prevalence of high blood pressure compared to females. AA/black individuals have a 5.4 percent higher prevalence of high blood pressure compared to white individuals.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the number one cause of death in AL and across most of the U.S. AL had a rate of 274.2 heart disease related deaths per 100,000 persons in 2019.

- The Southeastern Public Health District had the highest heart disease mortality rate (304.5 deaths per 100,000 persons).
- Rural areas had 313.8 heart disease deaths per 100,000 persons, compared to urban areas with 244.4 heart disease deaths per 100,000 persons.
- White individuals had 319.1 heart disease deaths per 100,000 persons, compared to AA/black individuals with 239.5 heart disease deaths per 100,000 persons.
- Age increased the risk of heart disease mortality with individuals over age 65 years old experiencing 1,201.8 deaths per 100,000 persons.
- Shelby County, located in the Northeastern Public Health District, had the highest stroke rate with 142.1 deaths per 100,000 persons.
- Rural areas had 73.0 stroke deaths per 100,000 persons, compared to urban areas with 58.4 stroke deaths per 100,000 persons.



Heart Disease Mortality Rate

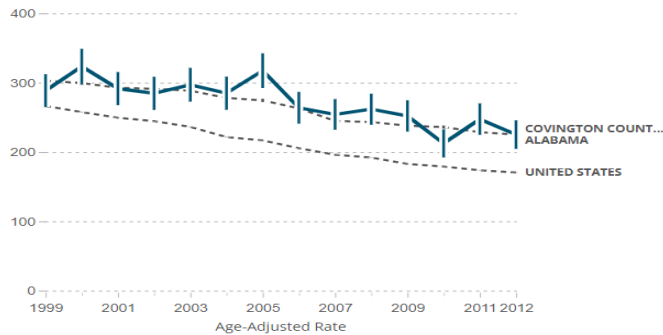
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for males and females in the US.
- In 2019, cardiovascular disease was the leading cause of death in Alabama, according to Alabama Department of Public Health.
- Frequent physical distress decreased 26% from 16.0% to 11.8% of adults between 2019 and 2020
- Heart disease has been the leading cause of death in Alabama since 1926
- Rural counties have a higher rate of heart disease mortality than urban counties
- African Americans are significantly more likely to have and to die of stroke
- The counties with the five highest rates are Wilcox, Dallas, Walker, Clay, and Washington
- Alabama’s heart disease mortality rate is one and a half times greater for males than females.
- The mortality rate for those of Hispanic origin is just over one-third that for non-Hispanics
- The 15 counties with highest heart disease mortality rates are all rural communities.

Heart Disease Mortality Trends in Covington County, Alabama

Certain populations are more at risk of contracting heart disease. This includes people with abnormal heartbeats or heart defects, high body mass indexes, or diabetes. In addition, negative lifestyle choices can increase risk of heart disease including poor diet, smoking, and excessive drinking.

While heart disease remains the leading cause of death in the U.S., since 1999 the rate of deaths by heart disease has decreased. [Factors related to this decline](#) may include a concurrent decline in tobacco use, along with major advances in medical technology and treatment. Despite the decline, in recent years the trend has flattened.

Heart Disease Deaths per 100,000 Pop.



124
Deaths

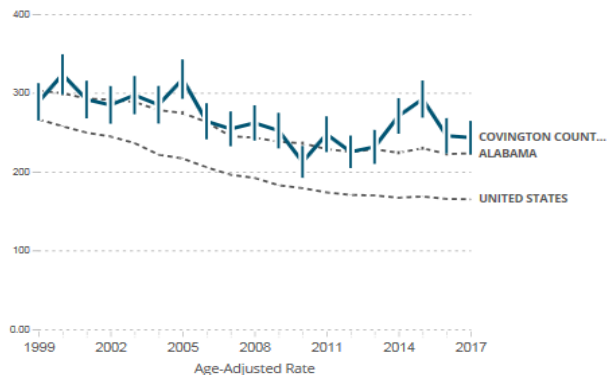
Heart Disease
2012
Covington County, AL

Heart Disease Mortality Trends in Covington County, Alabama

Certain populations are more at risk of contracting heart disease. This includes people with abnormal heartbeats or heart defects, high body mass indexes, or diabetes. In addition, negative lifestyle choices can increase risk of heart disease including poor diet, smoking, and excessive drinking.

While heart disease remains the leading cause of death in the U.S., since 1999 the rate of deaths by heart disease has decreased. [Factors related to this decline](#) may include a concurrent decline in tobacco use, along with major advances in medical technology and treatment. Despite the decline, in recent years the trend has flattened.

Heart Disease Deaths per 100,000 Pop.



139
Deaths

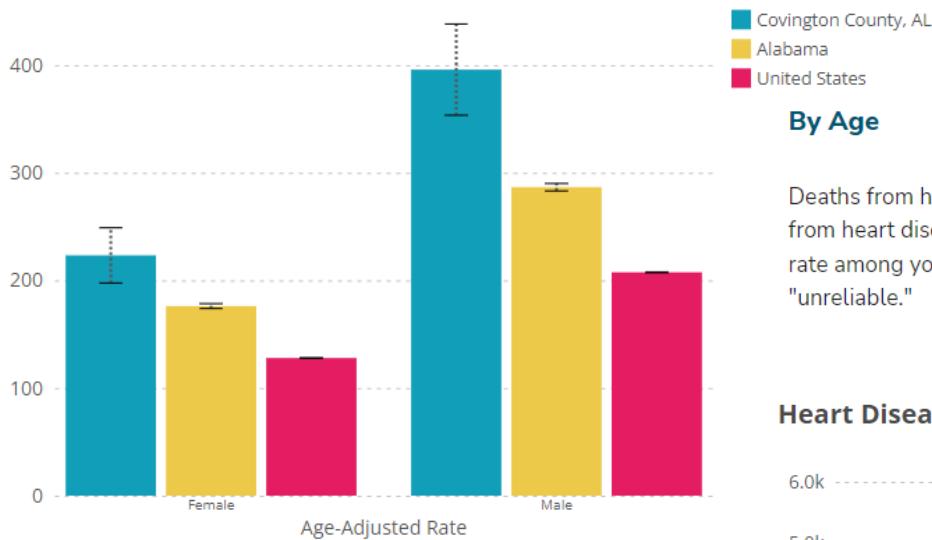
Heart Disease
2017
Covington County, AL

Demographic Differences in Covington County Heart Disease Deaths

By Sex

While heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States, Men statistically have a higher mortality rate from heart disease than women.

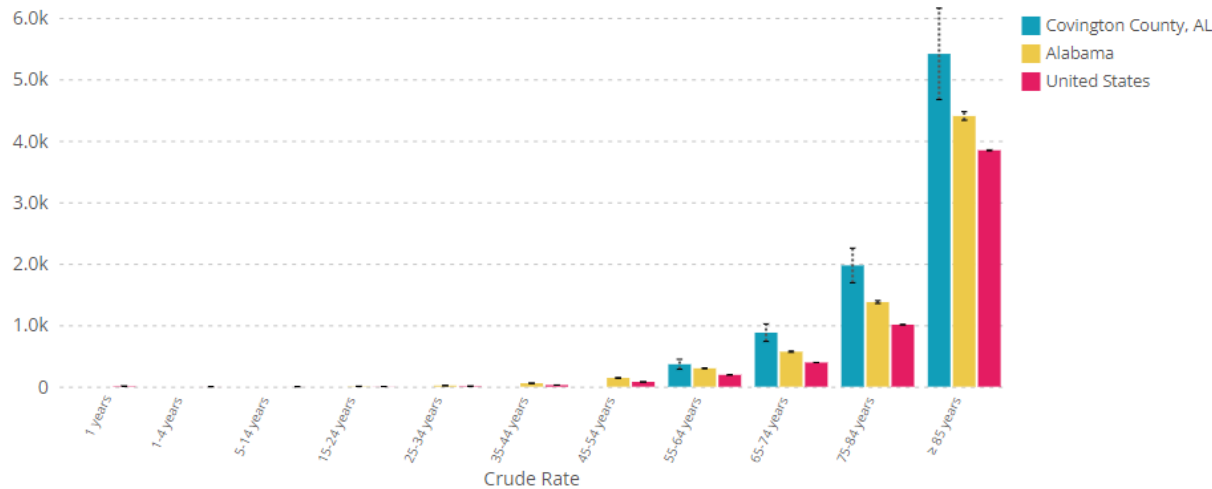
Heart Disease Deaths per 100,000: by Sex (2018)



By Age

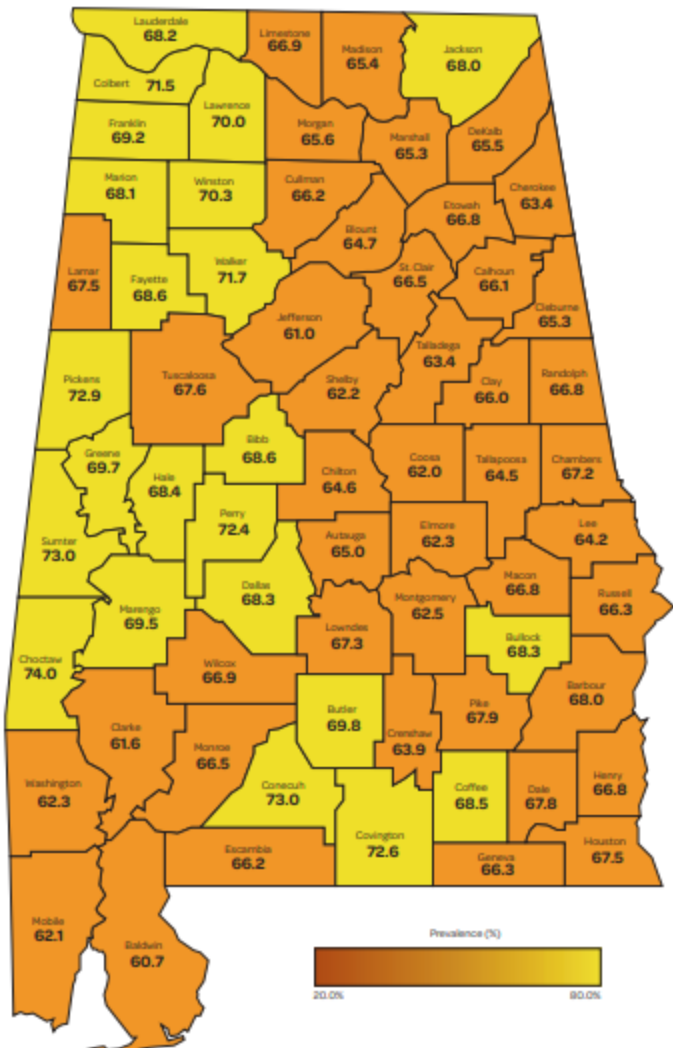
Deaths from heart disease disproportionately affect the elderly. For young Americans, death from heart disease, while tragic, is relatively rare. In many localities, the heart disease death rate among younger people is rare enough that the CDC only reports it as unavailable or "unreliable."

Heart Disease Deaths per 100,000: by Age (2018)



Data unavailable for: 35-44 years Covington County, AL, 45-54 years C...

Figure 8.1 – This map represents the percentage of Medicare recipients with hypertension throughout the state. Source: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.



Data Sources

Figure 1.1 – Hypertension Among Medicare Recipients, 2018. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2019. Data requested March 2021

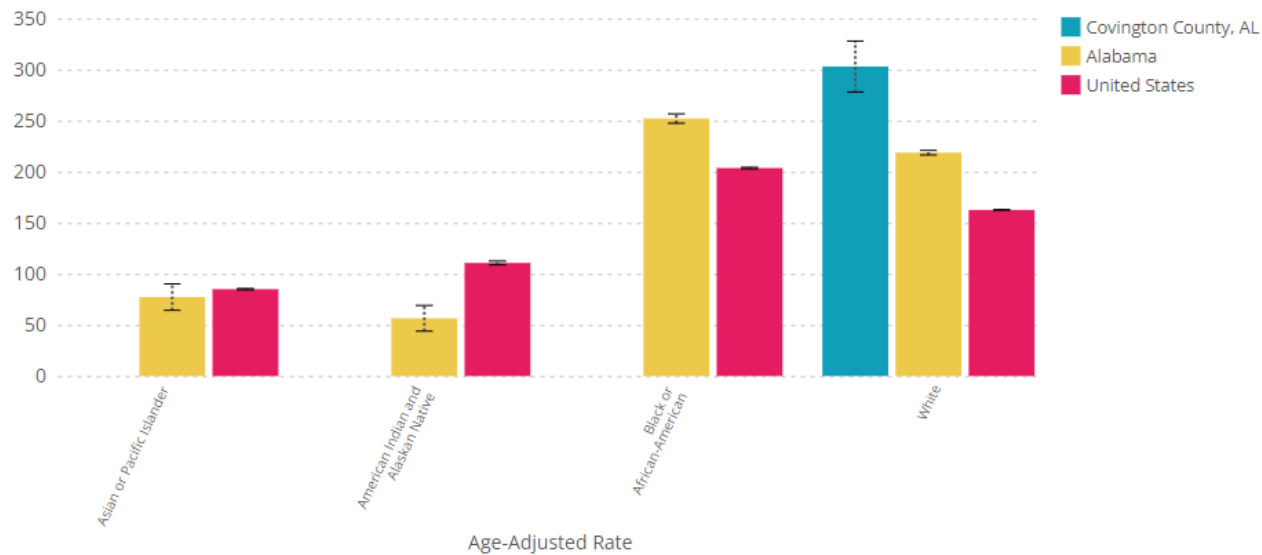
Figure 8.4 – Heart Disease and Stroke Mortality Rate in AL, 2019. ADPH, Center for Health Statistics Mortality Files, 2019. Data requested March 2021.

Written Sources

By Race

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for whites and African Americans. For American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders, heart disease is [second only to cancer](#).

Heart Disease Deaths per 100,000: by Race (2018)



Data unavailable for: American Indian and Alaskan Native Covington Co...

1. CDC, Heart Disease, 2019.
2. Americas Health Rankings, Cardiovascular Diseases, 2018.
3. AHA, Food Deserts and Adverse Cardiovascular Outcomes, 2019.
4. AL Medicaid Agency, Hypertension, 2019.