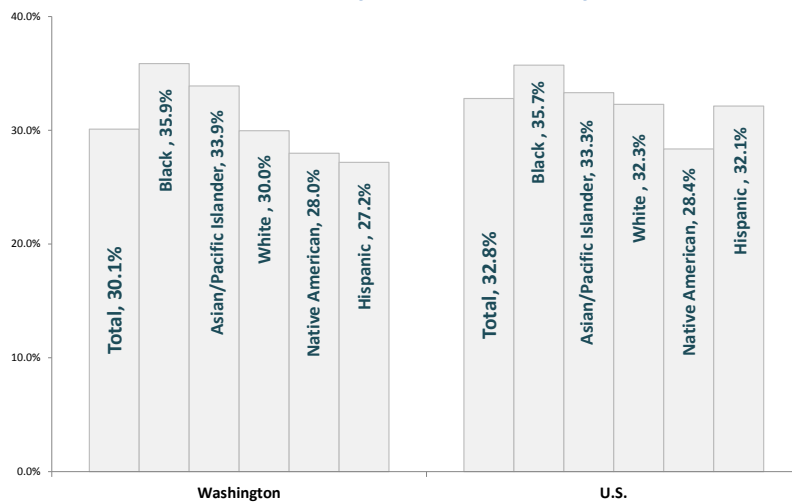


Washington State MONAHRQ Factsheet

Cesarean Delivery Rates Vary Among Racial/Ethnic Groups in Washington and U.S.

In 2012, 76,344 women living in Washington gave birth in Washington and Oregon hospitals. Of these births, 22,977 or 30 percent were delivered with cesarean section procedures (including both primary and repeat cesarean sections), based on analysis of data from the Washington State MONAHRQ.¹ Washington's average rate of cesarean delivery is lower than the U.S. rate of 32.8 percent for 2012², but still much higher than the 5 to 10 percent rate recommended by the World Health Organization³, indicating a potential excess in use. Research suggests that cesarean delivery is associated with increased maternal and neonatal complications in addition to increased health costs.^{4,5,6}

Cesarean Delivery Rates in 2012 for Washington State and U.S., by Race and Ethnicity



The rates of cesarean deliveries vary among the racial and ethnic women groups in Washington. Hispanic women and non-Hispanic Native American women have the lowest rates at 27.2 percent and 28.0 percent, respectively, both below the state average. For non-Hispanic White women, the rate is identical to the state average of 30 percent. Non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander women have the second highest rate at 33.9 percent. Non-Hispanic Black women have the highest rate of 35.9 percent.⁷

Washington's racial and ethnic cesarean delivery rates have a similar pattern to that of the U.S., except for the lower rate of the Hispanic group in Washington and the fact that the differences in Washington's rates are somewhat more pronounced. In the U.S., Native American women have the lowest rate, 28.4 percent. Hispanic women and non-Hispanic White women have rates similar to the national average at 32.1 percent and 32.3, respectively. As in Washington, non-Hispanic Black women and Asian/Pacific Islander women in the U.S. have the highest rates at 35.7 percent and 33.3 percent, respectively.⁸

¹ For information about the Washington State MONAHRQ or WaMONAHRQ, visit www.wamonahrq.net.

² See <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/delivery.htm>.

³ World Health Organization. Appropriate technology for birth. *Lancet* 1985; 2: 436-7.

⁴ Häger, Renate M.E., et al. "Complications of cesarean deliveries: Rates and risk factors," *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, Vol. 190, Issue 2, February 2004, P. 428-434.

⁵ *The Cost of Having a Baby in the United States*. (<http://transform.childbirthconnection.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Cost-of-Having-a-Baby1.pdf>)

⁶ Staff analysis of data from WaMONAHRQ shows the average cost for cesarean sections in Washington in 2012 was \$9,125 (compared with \$5,756 for vaginal deliveries), with a total cost of approximately \$210 million.

⁷ Estimates on Washington's racial and ethnic groups' rates of cesarean deliveries at the state level are based on staff analysis of data from the WaMONAHRQ for 2012 after excluding 3,363 cases with mother's race and ethnicity being "unknown" or "other."

⁸ Estimates on racial and ethnic groups' rates of cesarean deliveries at the national level are based on staff analysis of CDC's national birth data for 2012.

Washington State MONAHRQ Factsheet

(For questions on Washington State MONAHRQ or this factsheet, please send your inquiry to wei.yen@ofm.wa.gov.)