

# HEALTH WATCH

Rutherford County Health Watch provides a brief summary of the county's health status at a particular point in time. This edition of Health Watch highlights the 2011 county health rankings, birth outcomes, death measures, youth and senior adult health trends, and important health-related websites and information.

## Rutherford County Health Rankings

Using the University of Wisconsin's county ranking process, the Tennessee Institute for Public Health (TNIPH) published its county health rankings index and individual county profiles in 2007 and 2008. Using a similar model, the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation produced the 2010 and 2011 county health rankings for all counties nationwide. The annual report ranks counties by health outcomes and health factors, as well as the components of each. **Health outcomes** represent how healthy a county is, and rankings are based on measures of mortality (how long people live) and morbidity (how healthy people feel while alive). **Health factors** are what influence the health of a county, and rankings are based on scores from four factors: behavioral, clinical, social and economic, and environmental.

Overall, Rutherford County is ranked third healthiest among the 95 counties in Tennessee. Rutherford County improved its health factors rank from 9 in 2010 to 4 in 2011. Its health outcomes rank has remained the same at 3. While generally healthier than most other Tennessee counties, Rutherford County exceeds the national averages in three key factors: smoking, obesity, and violent crime. **Table 1** presents selected health outcomes and health factors included in the county health rankings report and the measures for both Rutherford County and Tennessee. Also included are the range of minimum and maximum measures within the state and the national benchmarks for the selected components.

According to the National Institutes of Health, diabetes affects 8.5 percent of the U.S. adult population as of 2010.\* In 2008, Rutherford County exceeded the national average with the adult diabetes rate at 10 percent, however, this rate was lower than the Tennessee statewide rate of 10.4 percent. The Tennessee statewide rate for diabetes in 2010 is reported at 10.2 percent.

\*National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse – National Institutes of Health. Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: National Diabetes Surveillance System, Tennessee and Rutherford County, TN; United Health Foundation, America's Health Rankings.

**Table 1. County Health Rankings – Rutherford County, TN**

	Rutherford County	Range in Tennessee (Min–Max)	State Average	National Benchmark
<b>Health Outcomes - Rank: 3</b>				
<b>MORTALITY - RANK: 3</b>				
Premature death (years of potential life lost before age 75 per 100,000 population)	6,957	4,043–15,275	9,264	5,564
<b>MORBIDITY - RANK: 7</b>				
Poor or fair health (percentage of adults)	18%	7%–34%	19%	10%
Low birth weight (percentage of live births <2500 grams)	8.4%	6.7%–13.8%	9.4%	6%
<b>Health Factors - Rank: 4</b>				
<b>HEALTH BEHAVIORS - RANK: 13</b>				
Smoking (percentage of adults who currently smoke)	21%	15%–38%	24%	15%
Obesity (percentage of adults overweight or obese [BMI=>30])	31%	27%–38%	31%	25%
<b>CLINICAL CARE - RANK: 37</b>				
Uninsured adults (percentage of adults under age 65)	20%	11%–26%	19%	13%
Preventable hospital stays (rate per 1,000 Medicare enrollees)	94	51–283	90	52
<b>SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS - RANK: 3</b>				
Graduation Rate (9th graders who graduate in 4 years)	85%	45%–95%	73%	92%
Children in poverty (percentage under age 18)	12%	6%–44%	22%	11%
Violent crime (rate per 100,000 population)	506	42–1,536	744	100
<b>PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT - RANK: 47</b>				
Air pollution ozone (number of annual unhealthy air quality days)	2	0–26	8	0
Access to healthy foods (percentage of zip codes with healthy food outlet)	55%	10%–100%	57%	92%
Access to recreational facilities(rate of facilities per 100,000 population)	5	0–25	8	17

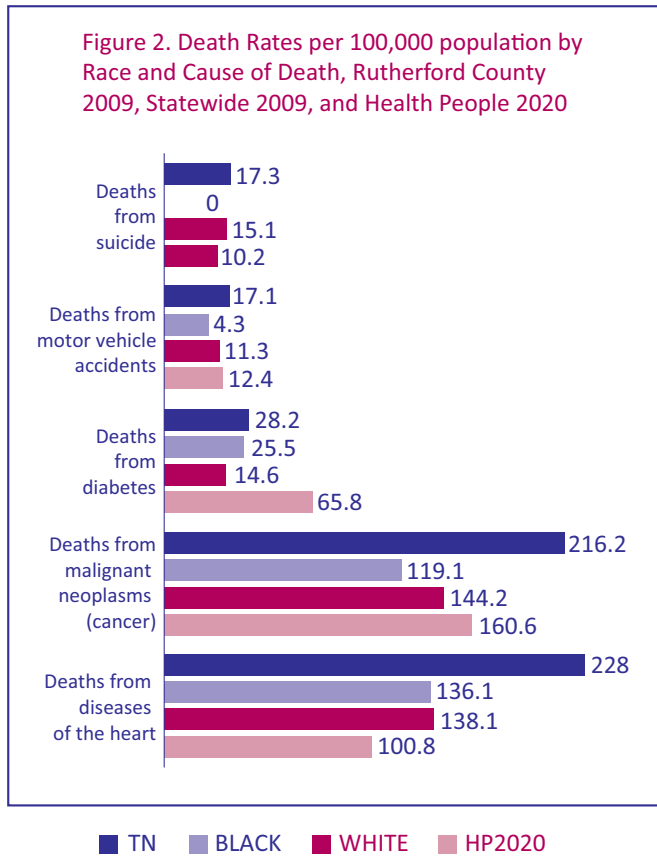
Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, County Health Rankings Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health 2011, Tennessee <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/tennessee/rutherford>; accessed March 31, 2011.

## Death Measures

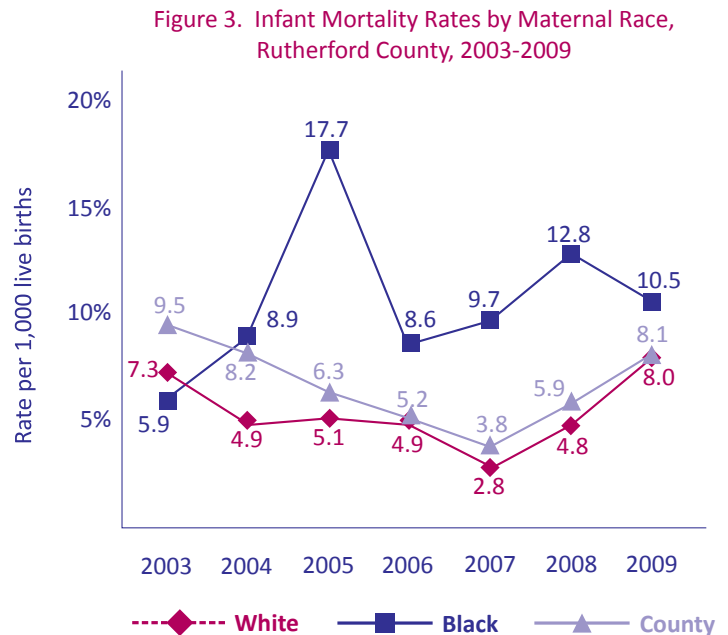
There were 1,446 deaths recorded in Rutherford County in 2009, with a rate of approximately 6 deaths per 1,000 residents. As in years past, only Williamson County had a lower death rate than

Rutherford. **Figure 2** presents and compares 2009 death rates by race and selected causes of death to both the statewide rates and Healthy People 2020 target rates.

The overall Rutherford County infant mortality rate in 2009 was 8.1 deaths per 1,000 live births. The county rate and the rate for white births have been increasing since 2007, after a steady decline from 2003 to 2007. **Figure 3** shows the overall county rates and rate by race of mother from 2003 to 2009.



Sources: Tennessee Department of Health; Office of Policy, Planning, and Assessment; Division of Health Statistics; and Healthy People 2020



Source: Tennessee Department of Health; Office of Policy, Planning, and Assessment; Division of Health Statistics

## Birth Outcomes

There were 3,697 live births in Rutherford County in 2009, the last year for which data are available. This was a decrease of 9.2 percent from the 4,075 live births in 2008.

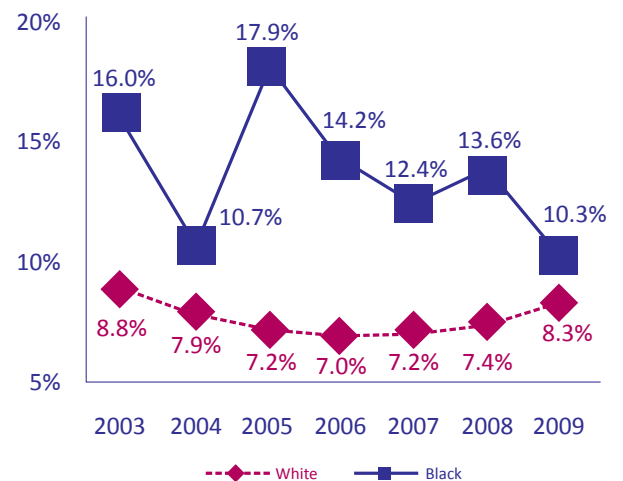
Adverse pregnancy and birth outcomes can impact the health of the community. Low birth weight, for example, can lead to chronic health and medical problems as well as neonatal and infant mortality. The percent of low birth weight black infants in Rutherford county has declined from 16 percent in 2003 to 10.3 percent in 2009. The percentage of low birth weight white infants has remained relatively stable over the same time, with a 2009 rate of 8.3 percent. **Figure 1** shows percentages for both groups exceed the Healthy People 2020 target rate of 7.8 percent. (Healthy People provides science-based, 10-year national objectives for improving the health of all Americans.)

The percentage of live births in Rutherford county by maternal age in 2009:

Under 18	3%
18–19 yrs.	7%
20–24 yrs.	25%
25–34 yrs.	54%
35–44 yrs.	11%

Source: Tennessee Department of Health, Office of Policy, Planning and Assessment, Division of Health Statistics

**Figure 1. Percent Low Birth Weight Births by Maternal Race, Rutherford County, 2003-2009**



Source: Tennessee Department of Health; Office of Policy, Planning, and Assessment; Division of Health Statistics

## Youth

Population estimates for 2009 indicate there are over 66,000 youth under 18 who live in Rutherford County, representing nearly 26 percent of the total population.

Source: County Health Rankings – Rutherford County, TN.

The Tennessee Coordinated School Health Office reported in its 2008–2009 Executive Summary that the prevalence of childhood obesity in Tennessee has decreased in the past year, resulting in over 8,000 more children with body mass indexes classified as healthy. Childhood obesity continues to be a significant concern, however; two out of five Tennessee students are still classified as either overweight or obese.

In 2008, over 20,000 of Rutherford County’s youth were on TennCare, which represented over 29 percent of the county’s youth. Nearly 42% of Tennessee youth statewide were on TennCare in the same year.

Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation – Kids Count Data Center 2009.

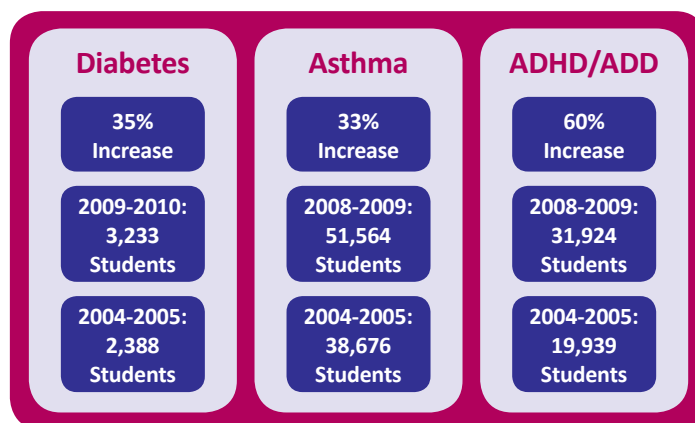
Almost 30 percent of Rutherford County’s youth participated in the free/reduced lunch program in 2009. In 2008, 17 percent of young children in Rutherford County were enrolled in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, which is a federal assistance program of the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture that provides health care and nutrition for low-income pregnant women, breastfeeding women, and infants and children under the age of five.

Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation – Kids Count Data Center 2009.

The total number of **students in Tennessee with chronic illness or disability diagnoses increased by 32 percent** between 2004–2005 and 2009–2010. Figure 4 details the changes for the most prevalent diagnoses of diabetes, asthma, and ADHD/ADD.

Source: Tennessee Department of Education, Office of Coordinated School Health Annual Data and Compliance Report 2009–2010.

Figure 4. Number of Tennessee students with diabetes, asthma, and ADHD/ADD diagnoses, 2004-2005 and 2009-2010 school years.



Source: Tennessee Department of Education, Office of Coordinated School Health Annual Data and Compliance Report, 2009–2010.

## Senior Adults

County health rankings for 2011 indicate there are 20,563 adults 65 years and older in Rutherford County and of those

- 36.2% have some type of disability,
- 35.5% are overweight,\*
- 26.1% are obese,\*
- 20.5% have diabetes.†

\*Regional data – Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro Metropolitan Statistical Area. †Statewide data. Sources: 2008 American Community Survey 1-year Estimates- Rutherford County, U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data, 2010; County Health Rankings – Rutherford County, TN; Tennessee Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Fact Sheets Tennessee, 2008.

Rutherford County population projections – adults 65 years and older:

- 2009: 20,406 - 11.1% of population
- 2012: 23,555 - 12.1% of population
- 2020: 35,792 - 16.1% of population

Source: Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability Needs Assessment, Key Social and Health Indicators Report, February 2009.

Rutherford County Leading Causes of Death – adults 65 years and older:

- Heart disease, 30%
- Cancer, 22%

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Community Health Status Indicators, 2009.

The average life expectancy in Rutherford County is 76.2 years.

## Web Sites for Health-Related Data

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Community Health Status Indicators, U.S. Department for Health and Human Services

<http://communityhealth.hhs.gov/>

Tennessee State Health Plan

<http://tn.gov/finance/healthplanning/stateHealthPlan.shtml>

Health Information Tennessee, Tennessee Department of Health

<http://hit.state.tn.us/home.aspx>

Healthy People 2020

[www.healthypeople.gov](http://www.healthypeople.gov)

County Health Rankings

[www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org)

Tennessee Institute of Public Health

<http://tennessee.gov/tniph/index.html>

Health Care Career Map

[www.healthcarecareermap.org](http://www.healthcarecareermap.org)

Tennessee Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan

[http://health.state.tn.us/CCCP/TCCC\\_Plan.pdf](http://health.state.tn.us/CCCP/TCCC_Plan.pdf)

TN Cancer Coalition, Middle TN Region

<http://tc2middle.org/default.aspx>

Tennessee Department of Health

<http://health.state.tn.us/index.htm>

Tennessee Tobacco QuitLine

**1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)**

<http://health.state.tn.us/tobaccoquitline.htm>

Kids Count Data Center

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>

Wellness Council of Rutherford County

<http://www.rutherfordcountyttn.gov/rcwc/index.htm>

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