

## OVERVIEW

In 2008, the ten leading causes of death in Mecklenburg County remained the same as in 2007 with the exception of two causes. Unintentional Injury dropped from the fifth leading cause to the sixth. Influenza and Pneumonia dropped down from the ninth leading cause of death to the tenth leading cause.

Cancer remains the leading cause of death after surpassing Heart Disease as the leading cause for the first time in Mecklenburg County in 2004. In 2008, Septicemia moved up to the ninth leading cause. HIV Disease dropped out of the top ten leading causes of death in 2006 and has not returned as a leading cause since.

Mecklenburg County ranks comparably to the state of North Carolina and the United States with the following exceptions: for Alzheimer's disease, Mecklenburg County ranks higher than NC and the US. Mecklenburg ranks lower than NC and the US for Diabetes and COPD which refers to chronic diseases of the lower airway such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

**Top Ten Leading Causes of Death  
Mecklenburg, North Carolina, 2008 and the  
United States, 2007**

	Meck	NC	USA
<b>Cancer</b>	1	2	2
<b>Heart Disease</b>	2	1	1
<b>Stroke</b>	3	4	3
<b>Alzheimer's Disease</b>	4	6	6
<b>Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)</b>	5	3	4
<b>Unintentional Injury</b>	6	5	5
<b>Diabetes</b>	7	7	7
<b>Kidney Disease</b>	8	9	9
<b>Septicemia</b>	9	10	10
<b>Influenza and Pneumonia</b>	10	8	8

### 2008 MECKLENBURG QUICK FACTS: MORTALITY

- Unintentional Injury is leading cause of death for children ages 1-14 and adults ages 25-44.
- Since 2004, Alzheimer's disease has been the 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death.
- Men are more likely to die from Unintentional Injuries than women. Women are more likely to die of Alzheimer's than men.
- Homicide is the leading cause of death for youth and young adults ages 15-24.
- Whites die at higher rates of Alzheimer's and COPD than Minorities. Minorities die at higher rates of Unintentional Injury, Homicides, and Diabetes than Whites.

### SUMMARY OF MORTALITY TRENDS IN MECKLENBURG COUNTY

#### Positive Trends

- Deaths from Influenza and Pneumonia have been on the decline in Mecklenburg County.
- Unintentional Injury dropped from the 5<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death to the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause.

#### Areas for Improvement

- Homicide, Unintentional Injury, and Suicide remain in the top three leading causes of death among adults age 15-24.
- Cancer and Heart Disease remain leading causes of death for adults age 25 years and older.
- Males die of higher rates of Homicide and Suicide than females.

## TREND DATA

- In 2008, Cancer was the leading cause of death and Heart Disease was the second leading cause of death.
- The number of cancer deaths decreased 2.4% from 2007 to 2008. Cancer deaths decreased 5.2% for men and increased <1% for women.
- Deaths among males rank comparably to females with the exception of Unintentional Injury, Alzheimer's disease, Homicide, and Suicide. Females rank comparably to males with the exception of Infection and High Blood Pressure (Hypertension).
- Women tend to live longer and die of higher rates of Alzheimer's and other chronic diseases than men.
- Men die from Unintentional Injuries, Homicides, and Suicides at higher rates than females.
- People of other races often die at higher rates of Diabetes, Kidney Disease, Unintentional Injury, Homicide, and HIV than whites. They also die at younger ages than whites.
- Whites die at higher rates of Alzheimer's disease, COPD, and Infection than people of Other Races.
- Homicide and Motor Vehicle Crashes are the leading killers of adolescents and young adults ages 15-24.
- Congenital Birth Defects, Maternal Complications, and Prematurity/Low Birth Weight remain the leading causes of infant death.
- Unintentional Injury remains the leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 14 and the fourth leading cause of death among infants <1 year of age.
- In 2008, there were 142 infant and child deaths ages 0-17. Of the 142 deaths, 24% were *preventable* and a majority occurred among children ages 1-17.

### Leading Causes of Death by Age Group 2008 Mecklenburg County

Infants (< 1yr.)	Ages 25 - 44
* Congenital Defects	* Unintentional Injury
* Maternal Complications	* Cancer
* Prematurity & Immaturity	* Heart Disease
Ages 1 -14	Ages 45 - 64
* Unintentional Injury	* Cancer
* Cancer	* Heart Disease
* Homicide	* Unintentional Injury
Ages 15 - 24	Ages 65+
* Homicide	* Cancer
* Unintentional Injury	* Heart Disease
* Suicide	* Alzheimer's Disease

### Leading Causes of Death by Race 2008 Mecklenburg County

Whites	Minorities
1) Cancer	1) Cancer
2) Heart Disease	2) Heart Disease
3) Alzheimer's Disease	3) Stroke
4) Stroke	4) Unintentional Injury
5) COPD	5) Diabetes
6) Unintentional Injury	6) Kidney Disease
7) Septicemia	7) Homicide
8) Diabetes	8) Alzheimer's Disease
9) Influenza & Pneumonia	9) COPD
10) Kidney Disease	10) HIV

### Leading Causes of Death by Gender 2008 Mecklenburg County

Males	Females
1) Cancer	1) Cancer
2) Heart Disease	2) Heart Disease
3) Unintentional Injury	3) Alzheimer's Disease
4) Stroke	4) Stroke
5) COPD	5) COPD
6) Alzheimer's Disease	6) Unintentional Injury
7) Diabetes	7) Diabetes
8) Homicide	8) Septicemia
9) Kidney Disease	9) Kidney Disease
10) Suicide	10) Hypertension