

Induced Abortion Summary

Background

Induced abortions must be reported to the Ohio Department of Health by the physician who performed the abortion, using the form "Confidential Abortion Reports". The report includes demographic and medical history information about the woman obtaining the abortion and information about the medical procedure. These reports are used to produce statistical reports about abortions occurring in Ohio. The forms are confidential: no identifying information about women who obtain abortions is collected except the medical record number. Physicians providing post-abortion care for complications are required to file a "Post Abortion Care Report for Complications". It is not possible to link these post-abortion reports to the "Confidential Abortion Reports". Both types of reports contain information about complications and are used to create statistical reports about post-abortion complications. This report presents information derived from both "Confidential Abortion Reports" and "Post-Abortion Care Reports for Complications" for 2001 in Ohio.

Characteristics of Induced Abortions Reported in Ohio, 2001

A total of 37,464 induced abortions were reported in Ohio for 2001, including 34,174 for Ohio residents (91.2%). The number of resident and total abortions performed in Ohio has remained fairly stable since 1994. There were 1.8% fewer abortions reported in 2001 than in 2000 (n=38,140).

Approximately one sixth of women who obtained abortions were under 20 years of age, with another third between the ages of 20-24 years of age. The age distribution of women obtaining abortions has remained fairly unchanged since 1994. There was a decrease of 4% in the number of abortions obtained by Ohio residents under 30 years of age. This decrease was partially offset by an increase of 4% among women 30 years of age and older. Approximately 83% of women who obtained an abortion were unmarried. The marital status distribution has remained fairly constant since 1994. 57% of resident women who obtained abortions were White, 37% were African American, and 6% were Other races or unknown. 3% of abortions were obtained by women of Hispanic origin. African American women had an abortion rate per 1,000 women that was approximately four times as high as among White women.

Approximately 32% of women obtaining abortions in Ohio reported no prior pregnancies. Over half of all induced abortions involved pregnancies of 9 weeks or less (55%), with approximately 85% involving pregnancies of 12 weeks or less. The proportion involving abortions of 9 weeks or less increased from 42% in 1994, while the proportion between 9 and 12 weeks declined from 41% to 30%. There were 921 abortions involving pregnancies of 20 or more weeks, a number that increased from 649 in 1994. All reported abortions were obtained in seven major metropolitan areas of Ohio.

There were changes between 2000 and 2001 in method of termination for induced abortions performed in Ohio. Suction curettage was the most frequent method of termination at 86% (decrease from 92% in 2000). Dilation and evacuation was the method in 10% of procedures in 2001 (increase from 8% in 2000). The number of medical/non-surgical procedures increased substantially from 136 in 2000 (less than 1%) to 1,083 in 2001 (3%).

Reported post-abortion complications were rare, averaging approximately 2 per 1,000 procedures. 108 complications were reported on the "Post-Abortion Care Report for Complications" and 33 were reported on the "Confidential Abortion Reports". The most common type of abortion complications were incomplete abortion, infection, and hematometra, which together accounted for 75% of all complications.

County of residence for women obtaining abortions is reported in tables 3, 4, 5a, and 5b. In accordance with Ohio Department of Health data disclosure policies, some counties were removed from tables 5a and 5b. The removed counties had fewer than 25 female residents in the reported age/race categories.