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## **SECTION 3: INDUCED TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY**

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# Induced Termination of Pregnancy

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## Current trends

During 2009, 10,801 induced terminations of pregnancy occurred in Oregon. This total represents a 1.8 percent increase from 2008 and a decrease of 31.4 percent from the record high of 15,735 abortions reported in 1980. (See Figure 3-1.)

This chapter reports occurrence data for all abortions occurring in Oregon whether obtained by Oregon residents or residents of another state. The percentage of out-of-state residents terminating pregnancies in Oregon has been between 11.3 and 12.6 percent from 1992 to the present. In 2009, 1,217 patients (11.3 %) were out-of-state residents. (See Table 3-6.) Oregonians who obtained out-of-state abortions are not included in this data. Because rate calculations use Oregon population numbers, these calculations substitute out-of-state residents for the unknown number of Oregonians who obtained an abortion in another state. (See Appendix B, Technical Notes section for a more extensive discussion of the completeness of abortion data.)

Behavioral changes are revealed more by shifts in rates (which account for population change) than changes in the number of events. The U.S. abortion rate has been declining since 1980 from approximately 25 per 1,000 women aged

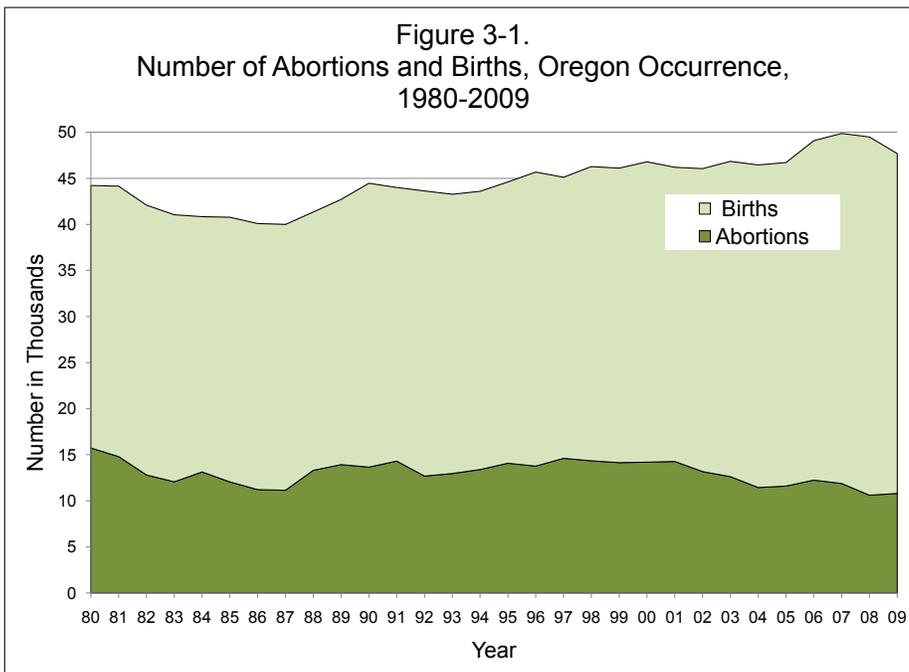


Table 3-A. Comparison of Oregon and U.S. Abortion Ratios, 1972-2008		
Year	U.S. Abortion Ratio <sup>1</sup>	Oregon's Abortion Ratio <sup>2</sup> as Percent Difference from U.S.
1972	180	+23%
1973	196	+19%
1974	242	+9%
1975	**	**
1976	312	+13%
1977	**	**
1978	347	-2%
1979	**	**
1980	359	-1%
1981	**	**
1982	354	-14%
1983	**	**
1984	364	-12%
1985	354	-16%
1986	354	-21%
1987	356	-21%
1988	352	-9%
1989	346	-6%
1990	344	-11%
1991	338	-4%
1992	334	-13%
1993	333	-10%
1994	321	-4%
1995	311 <sup>3</sup>	+2%
1996	315	-4%
1997	306	+6%
1998	264 <sup>3</sup>	+17%
1999	256 <sup>3</sup>	+12%
2000	245 <sup>4</sup>	+24%
2001	246 <sup>4</sup>	+25%
2002	246 <sup>4</sup>	+16%
2003	241 <sup>5</sup>	+12%
2004	238 <sup>5</sup>	+3.5%
2005	233 <sup>6</sup>	+6.6%
2006	236 <sup>7</sup>	+5.7%
2007	231 <sup>7</sup>	+4.2%
2008	*234 <sup>7</sup>	-8.4%

<sup>1</sup> Estimated Number of Abortions per 1,000 Live Births

<sup>2</sup> See Table 3-2

<sup>3</sup> Alaska, California, New Hampshire, and Oklahoma did not report

<sup>4</sup> Alaska, California, and New Hampshire did not report

<sup>5</sup> California, New Hampshire and West Virginia did not report

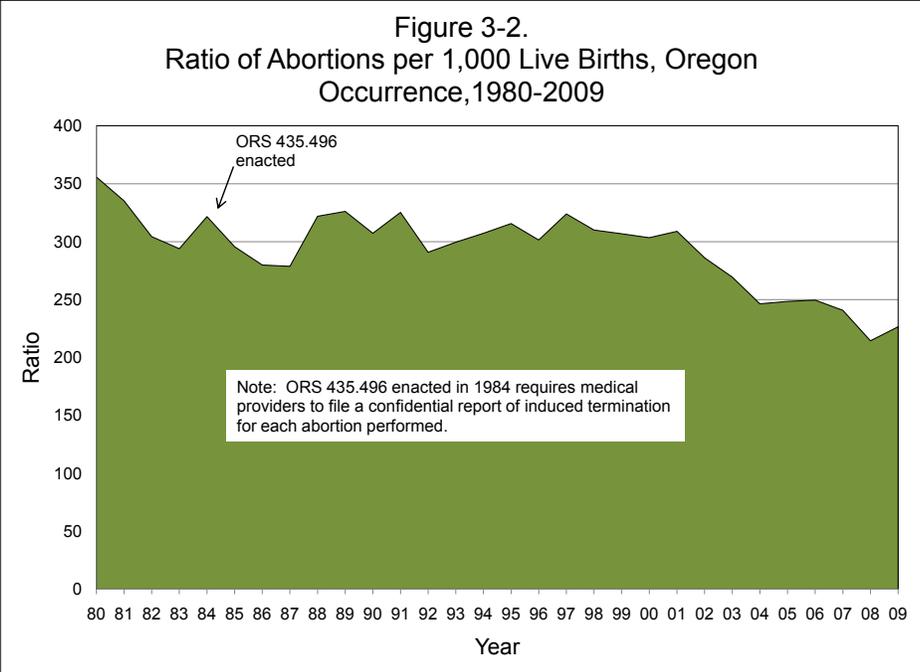
<sup>6</sup> California, Louisiana and New Hampshire did not report

<sup>7</sup> California, Maryland and New Hampshire did not report

\* Most recent data available

\*\* Data not available

15–44 to 16.0 per 1,000 in 2008, the most recent data available.<sup>1</sup> In 2009, the Oregon rate increased to 14.1 per 1,000 women aged 15–44, a 2.2 percent increase from 2008, and a 43.8 percent decrease from the record high seen in 1980 (25.1 per 1,000). During the past 20 years, Oregon’s abortion rate has generally declined— from a high of 21.4 in 1991, to the current low of 13.8 per 1,000 women aged 15–44 in 2008.



### Pregnancy outcomes

Figure 3-2 shows the ratio of abortions to births occurring in Oregon indicating the prevalence of unwanted pregnancies that occurred in the state. Both the highest abortion rate (number of abortions per 1,000 female population) and the highest ratio of abortions (number of abortions per 1,000 births) occurred in 1980. Between 1980 and 1987, the ratio of abortions to births declined, although an increased level of reporting beginning in 1984 (as a requirement of new legislation) obscures this fact.

In 2009, there were 226.5 abortions per 1,000 occurrence births. This represents an 5.6 percent increase from 2008 and a 36.3 percent decrease from 1980 when this ratio was 355.8 per 1,000 births. (See Table 3-2.)

Oregon’s abortion ratio was about one-fifth higher than that of the U.S. in 1973, when the U.S. Supreme Court’s

decision in *Roe v. Wade* legalized abortion. (See sidebar 3-A, page 3-2.) In the mid-1980s and early 1990s this changed: The rate at which Oregonians terminated pregnancy with an induced abortion was less than the U.S. as a whole. Since 1995 however, Oregon’s abortion ratio has fluctuated around the U.S. ratio. The 2008 abortion ratio in Oregon was slightly lower than the 2008 U.S. ratio (214.4 to 234), however, this difference is likely higher, due in part to some states not reporting (California, Maryland and New Hampshire).

### Abortion patients

Similar to birth rates, abortion rates differ by age group, race, ethnicity, marital status and prior pregnancy. Nearly three-fourths of abortion patients have never been married (See Table 3-3.), and more than half have previously given birth. (See Table 3-5.)

### Age

There is wide variation in abortion rates among age groups (see sidebar): The highest rate in 2009 occurred among women aged 20–24 (26.7 per 1,000). The lowest rates were among women 45–49, (0.2 per 1,000) and women under age 15 (0.3 per 1,000). (See Figure 3-3, sidebar 3-B.)

The 2009 abortion rate among teens aged 10–17 was 76.7 percent lower than the rate in 1980 (when the statewide

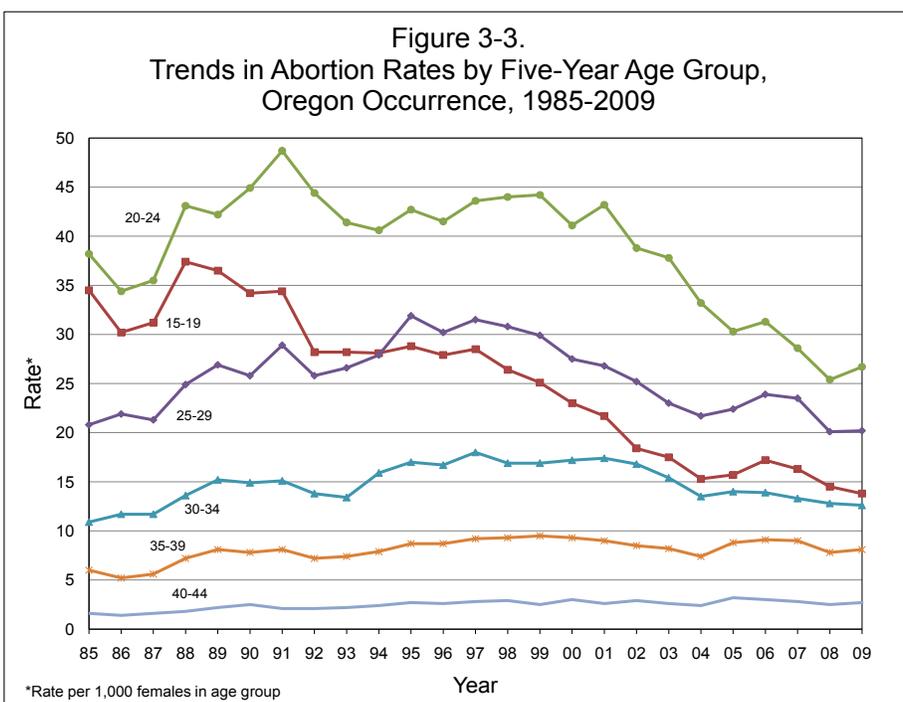
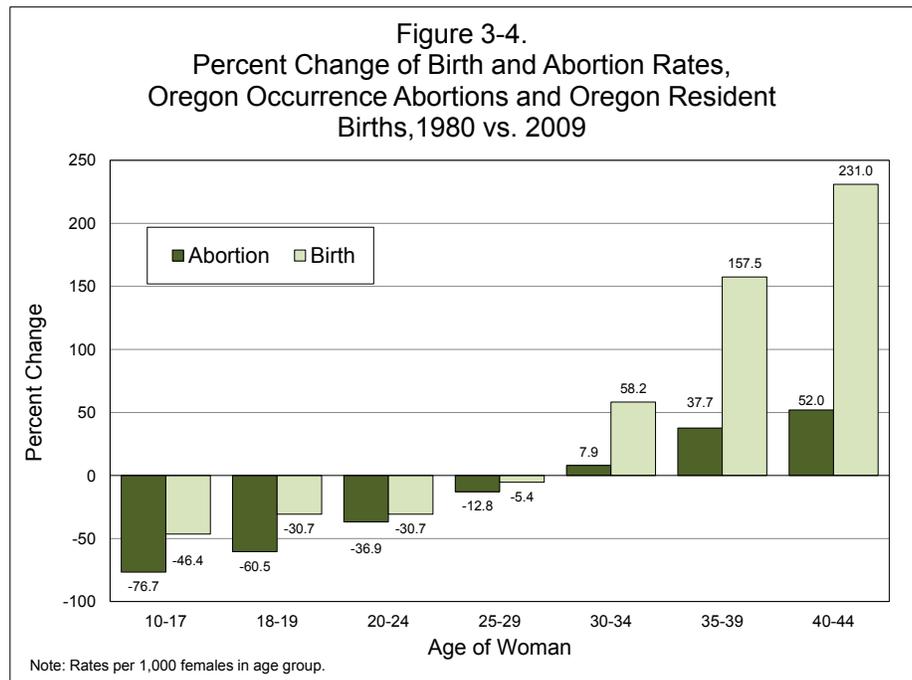


Table 3-B. Abortion Rates by Age and Percentage Distribution, Oregon Occurrence <sup>1</sup> , 2009		
Age	Rate <sup>2</sup>	%
<15	0.3	0.3
15-19	13.8	16.1
20-24	26.7	31.4
25-29	20.2	24.3
30-34	12.6	14.8
35-39	8.1	9.5
40-44	2.7	3.2
45-49	0.2	0.3
15-44	14.1	99.4

<sup>1</sup> Occurrence data include all abortions reported by providers located in Oregon, regardless of the patient’s residence. Because rate calculations employ Oregon population figures, these calculations, in effect, substitute out-of-state residents for Oregonians who may have obtained an abortion in another state.

<sup>2</sup> Per 1,000 females in age group



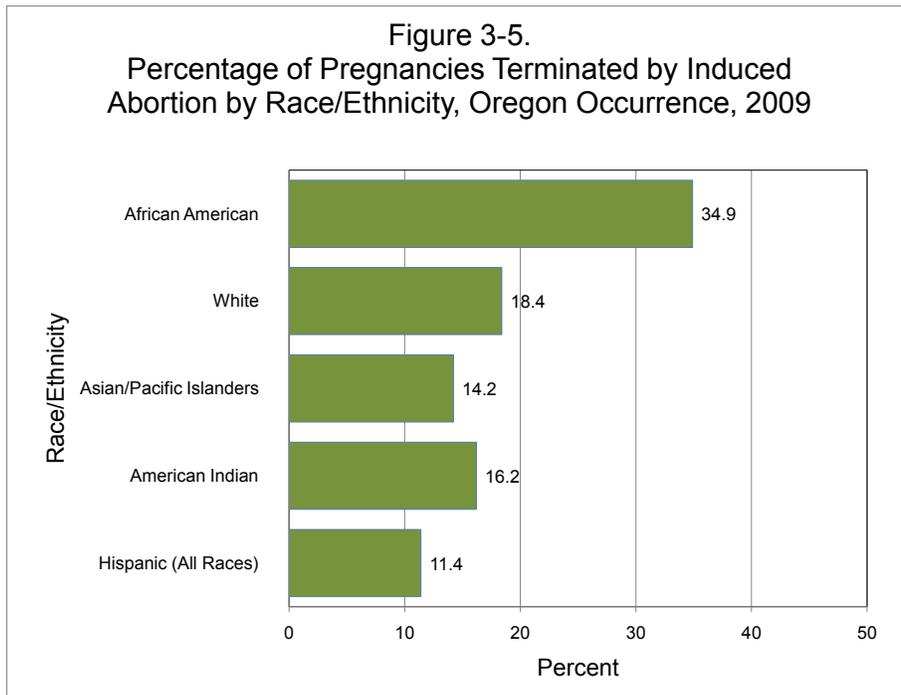
abortion rate was highest); the rate for 18- to 19-year-olds was 60.5 percent lower. (See Figure 3-4.) The absence of a corresponding increase in the birth rates among teens suggests success in avoiding unwanted pregnancy, rather than an increase in decisions to carry unwanted pregnancies to term. In contrast, among women age 30 and older, both abortion rates and birth rates were markedly higher in 2009 than in 1980.

### Race and ethnicity

Beginning in 2008, collection of race and ethnicity data on Oregon birth certificates changed to obtain more precise information about an individual's race and Hispanic ethnicity. In prior years, only one race category could be selected. Now multiple race and ethnicity categories may be chosen. For this reason, current pregnancy data (births and abortions) by race/ethnicity are not directly comparable to previous years.

The frequency with which abortion procedures were used to terminate pregnancies varied among ethnic and racial groups. African American and White women had the highest percentages of terminated pregnancies in 2009 with 34.9 and 18.4 percent respectively. Because Oregon's demographic composition is predominantly white, white women obtained the majority of abortions by count in 2009, but had only the second highest percentage of terminations

overall, 47.3 percent lower than African American women. American Indian women accounted for the smallest abortion count, however, 16.2 percent of their pregnancies were terminated. Asian and Pacific Island women followed at 14 percent. The lowest percent of terminated pregnancies was women of Hispanic ethnicity who terminated 11.4 percent of pregnancies in 2009 (See Figure 3-5.).



### Contraceptive use

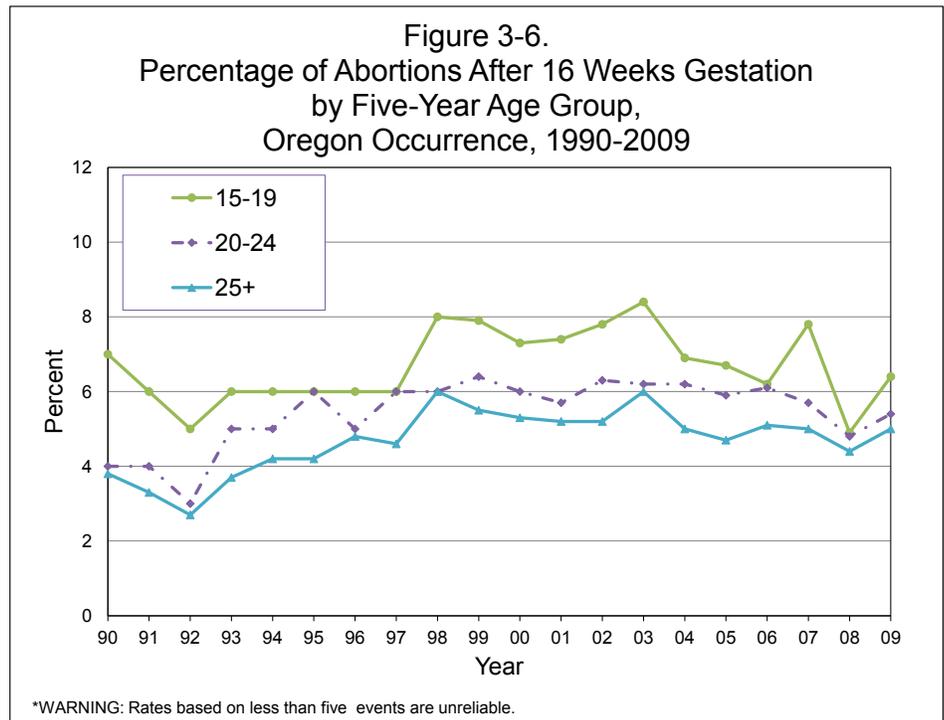
In the majority of abortions that occur in Oregon, the pregnancy is not a result of contraceptive failure. In 2009, based upon data obtained from abortion reports, 32.6 percent of women used some method of contraception to avoid pregnancy. (See Table 3-5.) Of the 67.4 percent of abortion patients who did not report using contraceptives, 40.5 percent had previously obtained an abortion.

### Medical procedures

More than 87 percent of abortions with known gestation were performed prior to the 13th week of pregnancy. About one in nearly 18 (5.6 %) induced terminations where gestation was known were performed after 16 weeks. Suction curettage was the procedure used in 59.0 percent of terminations prior to the 13th week where method was reported. Dilation and evacuation was the procedure in 88.6 percent of terminations occurring after 16 weeks

gestation. Women aged 15–19 obtained 24 percent more abortions after 16 weeks gestation than women aged 20 and older. (See Table 3-4.) The percentage of abortions occurring after 16 weeks gestation increased slightly for women in all age groups in 2009. (See Figure 3-6.)

Complications at the time of the induced termination procedure were reported for 232 terminations (2.1% of abortion patients). Retained products (78 patients) and failure of first method (48 patients) were the most common complications. In Oregon, no woman has died as the result of a legally induced termination.



## Geographic distribution

Abortion rates varied widely within Oregon with 34 of 36 counties reporting at least one resident who obtained an abortion in 2009. Service providers, conversely, were geographically concentrated. In 2009, abortions were reported in nine counties. The concentration was evident in the fact that 95.1 percent of all abortions were obtained in the five counties of highest occurrence: Jackson, Lane, Marion, Multnomah and Washington. (See Table 3-7.) Although abortions often may be sought outside a patient's community to help ensure anonymity, this degree of concentration suggests that access to abortion services may be limited for some Oregon women.

## **Endnote**

1. CDC. Abortion Surveillance - United States, 2008, MMWR, Nov.25, 2011; V60, No. SS-15.