

CHRONIC DISEASES

Chronic diseases are the leading cause of death and disability in the United States; they are also the most common and preventable conditions.¹ Seven of the top 10 causes of death in 2010 in the U.S. were due to chronic diseases; for more information on chronic disease mortality, see the Mortality chapter.

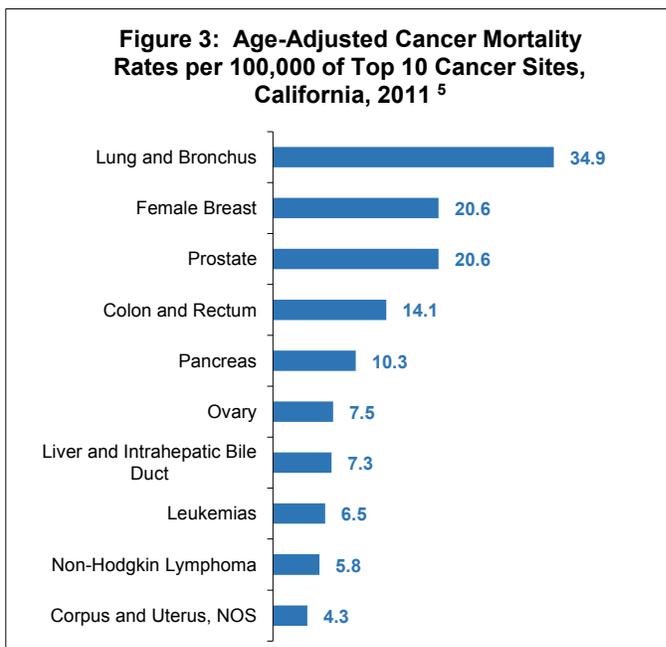
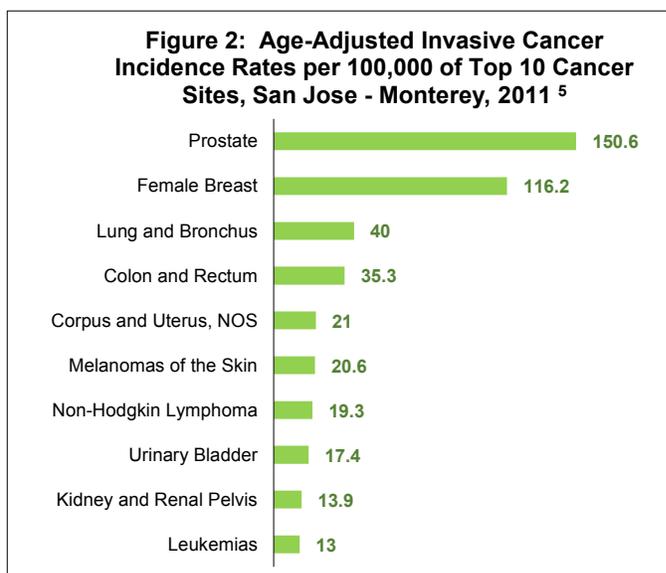
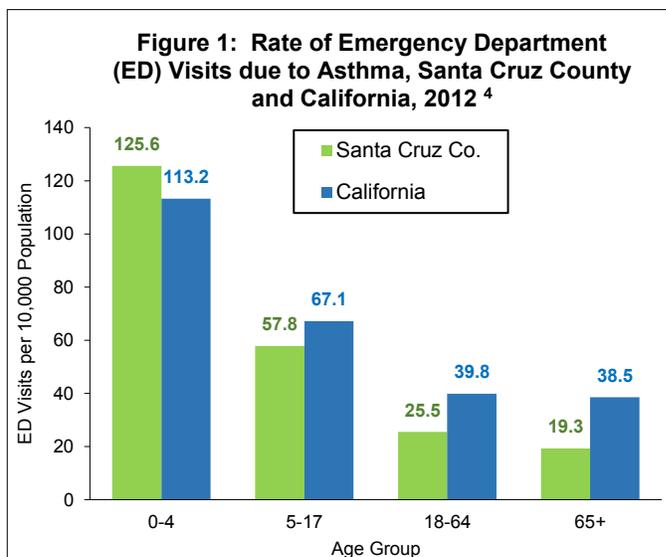
About half of all American adults are living with at least one chronic condition.¹ Most chronic diseases are attributable to a short list of modifiable risk factors: high blood pressure, tobacco use, obesity, physical inactivity, excessive alcohol use, and poor diet (see the Behaviors chapter for more data).² Fortunately, addressing the same risk factors can also serve as strategies to lessen the burden of chronic disease. The risk factors must be addressed at two levels: the individual level (including healthcare interventions) and the population level (policies and environments that promote health). This chapter summarizes the burden of some of the common chronic diseases.

ASTHMA

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory lung condition characterized by irregular periods of breathlessness, wheezing, coughing, and chest tightness.³ Some factors associated with development of asthma or triggering of asthma attacks are: tobacco smoke exposure (either active smoking or secondhand smoke), obesity, poverty, and unemployment. In 2012, Santa Cruz County had fewer asthma-related Emergency Department (ED) visits compared to the state, 37.7 per 10,000 population compared to 49.8, respectively.⁴ However, by age group, the 0-4 years olds in Santa Cruz County had a higher ED visit rate than the state (Figure 1). The Santa Cruz County hospitalization rate for asthma was lower than the state for all age groups in 2012, 5.1 per 10,000 population compared to 8.6, respectively. Racial inequities persist locally and statewide, with blacks having a higher ED visit rate than other racial and ethnic groups.

CANCER

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States, exceeded only by heart disease.⁵ Cancer is a term used to describe uncontrolled cell growth. Cancer is not just one disease but many. Figure 2 shows the incidence of invasive cancer for the top 10 cancer sites in the San Jose - Monterey area (which includes Santa Clara, San Benito, Santa Cruz and Monterey counties). Figure 3 shows mortality rates of the top 10 cancer sites for the entire state (local rates are not available).



CHRONIC DISEASES

DIABETES

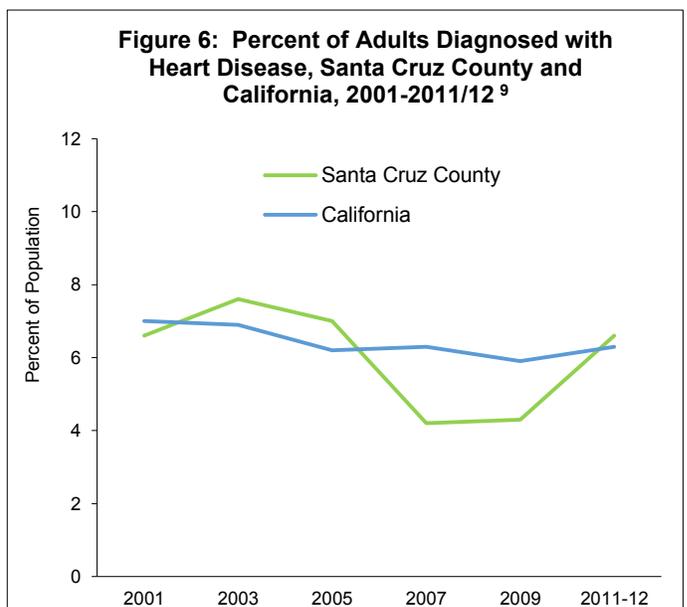
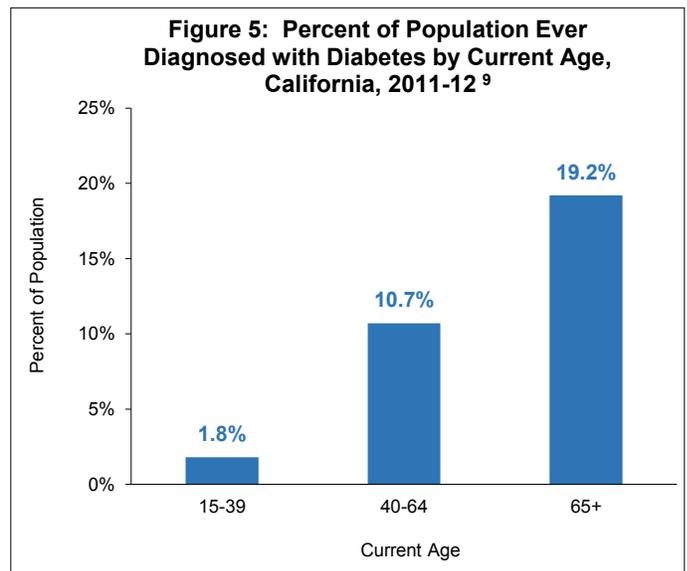
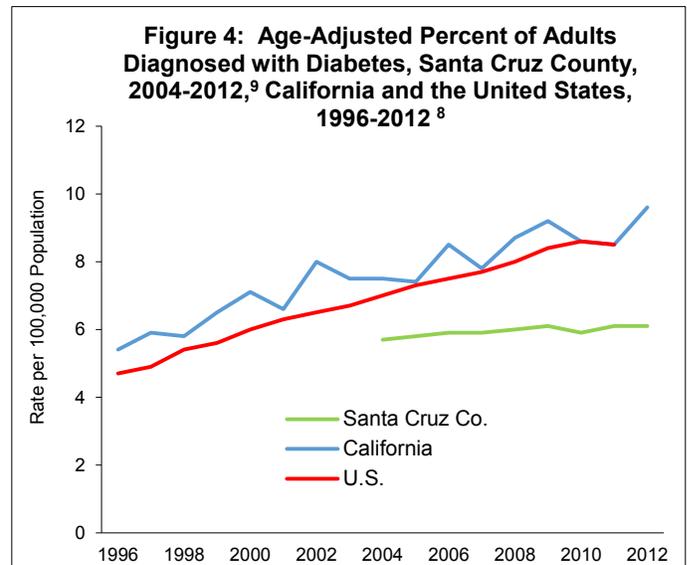
Diabetes is a disease in which blood glucose levels are above normal. The build up of sugar in the blood can cause serious health complications, such as: blindness, heart disease, kidney failure, and lower extremity amputations. In the United States, two people die of diabetes-related causes and 16 adults are newly diagnosed, every five minutes.⁶ Diabetes is the 7th leading cause of death in the United States. The CDC estimates that 9.3% of U.S. adults have diabetes and that an additional 27.8% of adults are not yet diagnosed. Medical expenditures for people with diabetes are 2.3 times higher than for those without diabetes.⁷

The percentage of adults with diabetes in the U.S. increased more than 80% between 1996 and 2011 (Figure 4).⁸ Fortunately, rates in Santa Cruz County have been more stable. However, the prevalence has been increasing slightly with approximately 300 adults newly diagnosed annually which does not include the large portion of those not yet diagnosed.⁹ In California, the rate of type 2 diabetes increases with age similar to the U.S. (Figure 5).

HEART DISEASE

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S., and accounts for 1 of every 4 deaths. The term "heart disease" refers to several types of heart conditions. Coronary artery disease (CAD) is the most common in the United States and can cause myocardial infarctions, angina, heart failure and arrhythmias. CAD occurs when plaque (or cholesterol) builds up in the arteries causing them to narrow – a condition called atherosclerosis.

In 2011-2012, 24% of Santa Cruz County adults (age 20 years and older) reported a diagnosis of high blood pressure which is a precursor to heart disease.⁹ During the same time frame, 6.6% of adults in Santa Cruz County reported they had been diagnosed with heart disease, compared to 6.3% statewide (Figure 6). Even though the Santa Cruz County rates appear to fluctuate, the values are ranging within an expected amount of normal variation due to sample size. The state numbers are more stable, and the 2011-2012 rate of 6.3% was significantly less than the 2001 rate of 7.0%.



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<p>Sources</p>	<p>(1) CDC. Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. "Chronic Disease Overview." http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/overview/index.htm</p> <p>(2) CDC. Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. "The Four Domains of Chronic Disease Prevention." http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/pdf/four-domains-factsheet-2015.pdf</p> <p>(3) Milet M, Tran S, Eatherton M, Flattery J, Kreutzer R. The Burden of Asthma in California: A Surveillance Report. Richmond, CA: California Department of Health Services, Environmental Health Investigations Branch, June 2007.</p> <p>(4) California Breathing. "Santa Cruz County Asthma Profile." Data originally from OSHPD. http://californiabreathing.org/asthma-data/county-asthma-profiles/santa-cruz-county-asthma-profile#riskfactorsdiv</p> <p>(5) U.S. Cancer Statistics Working Group. <i>United States Cancer Statistics: 1999–2011 Incidence and Mortality Web-based Report</i>. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Cancer Institute; 2014. Available at: www.cdc.gov/uscs.</p> <p>(6) CDC. Diabetes. http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/index.html</p> <p>(7) American Diabetes Association. "Economic Costs of Diabetes in the U.S. in 2012." <i>Diabetes Care</i> 2013; 36:1033-1046</p> <p>(8) CDC. National Diabetes Surveillance System. http://gis.cdc.gov/grasp/diabetes/DiabetesAtlas.html</p>
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