

DEATH & MORTALITY

MADISON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DATA BRIEF MARCH 2025



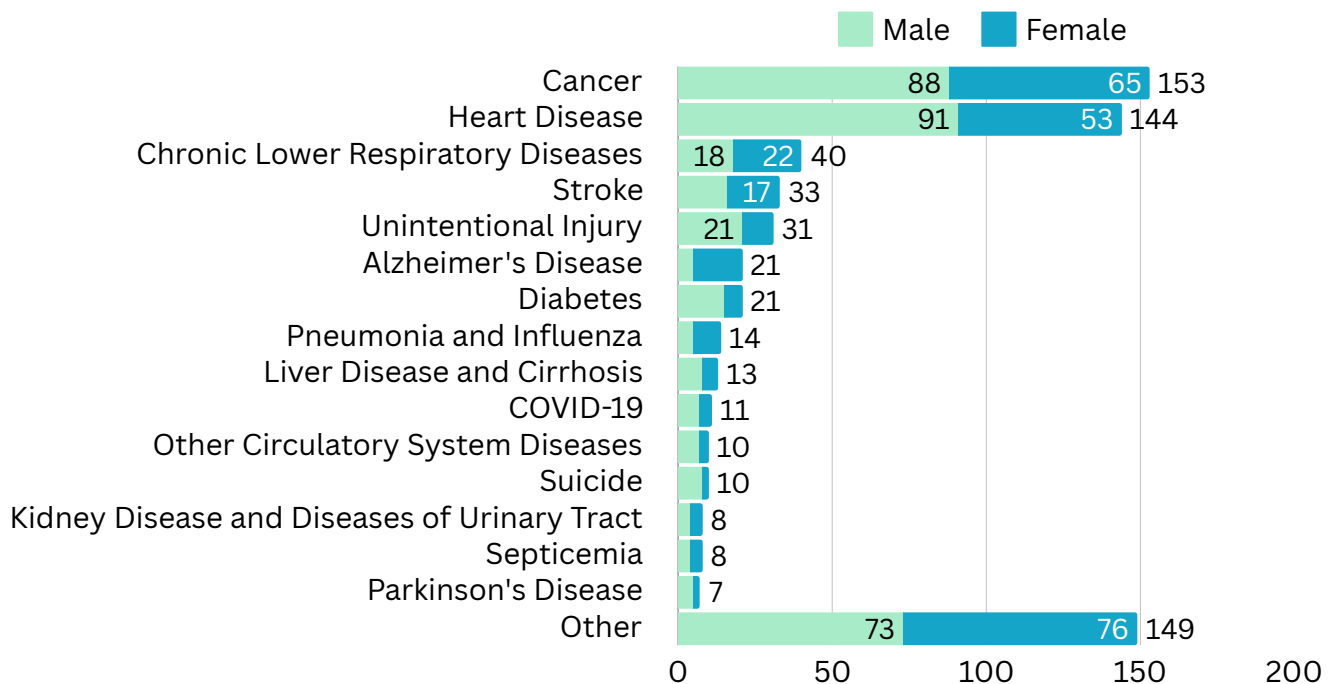
Death is a natural part of life, but many deaths can be prevented or delayed by making healthier choices. Understanding the most common causes of death in Madison County and the risk factors behind them is key to living a long and healthy life. This brief looks at the main causes of death in the county, who is most at risk, and the key factors that contribute to these causes.

LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH

In Madison County, cancer is the leading cause of death, followed by heart disease (Figure 1). In 2023, the most common cancers were lung, colon, and breast cancer, which are also the leading types of cancer death in the U.S. While cancer is the top cause of death in Madison County, heart disease ranks first in both New York State and the United States.

After cancer and heart disease, the next leading causes of death were chronic lower respiratory disease (CLRD), cerebrovascular disease (stroke), and unintentional injury (e.g., falls, overdoses, car crashes). During the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022), COVID-19 was among the top three causes of death, but dropped to 10th in 2023 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Leading Causes of Death in Madison County by Biological Sex (2023)



From 2019 to 2023, about 55% of Madison County deaths were among male residents compared to about 45% of female residents. On average, women live about six years longer than men, living to about 78 years. The three largest differences in leading causes of death between men and women are Alzheimer's disease (75% female), unintentional injury (67% male), and suicide (80% male).

LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH BY AGE

Older adults are more likely to die from chronic diseases like cancer, heart disease, and CLRD. In 2023, cancer was the leading cause of death for people aged 45-84, while heart disease was the top cause for those 85 and older. The primary causes of deaths among people under 44 years in Madison County are unintentional injury and suicide.

In 2023, unintentional injuries were the leading cause of death for people between ages 5 and 44. Infant deaths are rare, but when they do happen, they are usually due to complications during pregnancy or birth, birth defects, or sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) (Table 1).

Table 1: Leading Causes of Death in Madison County by Age Cohort (2019-2023)

Age Groups (Years)	Cause #1	Cause #2	Cause #3
85 and older	Heart Disease	Cancer	COVID-19
75-84	Cancer	Heart Disease	CLRD
65-74	Cancer	Heart Disease	CLRD
55-64	Cancer	Heart Disease	CLRD
45-54	Cancer	Heart Disease	Unintentional Injury
35-44	Unintentional Injury	Cancer	Heart Disease & Suicide
25-34	Unintentional Injury	Suicide	Cancer
15-24	Unintentional Injury	Suicide	Diabetes
5-14	Unintentional Injury	Birth Defects	*
Under 4	Perinatal Period Condition	Unintentional Injury & Birth Defects & SIDS	*

*Too few deaths observed

0.5%

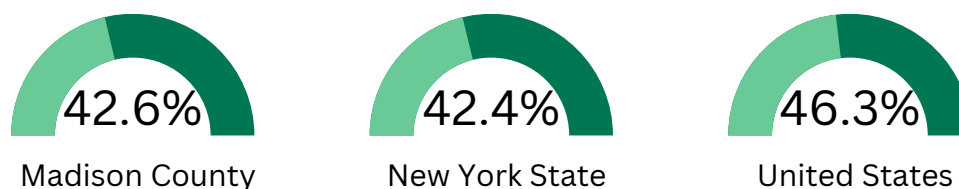
Deaths under 18

Deaths among young people in Madison County are not common. Between 2019 and 2023, only 1.1% of deaths were of people under 24, and just 0.5% were of those under 18. Infant deaths made up only 0.3% of all deaths during this period.

PREMATURE DEATH IN MADISON COUNTY

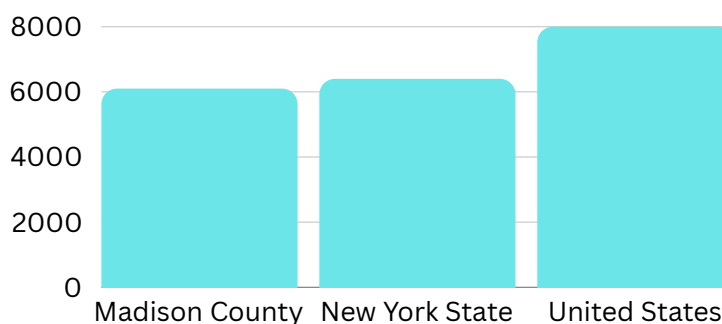
Premature deaths are deaths that occur before age 75, the average life expectancy in the United States. In Madison County, the percent of residents dying prematurely is lower than in New York and the United States overall (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Percent of Premature Deaths by Location (2022)



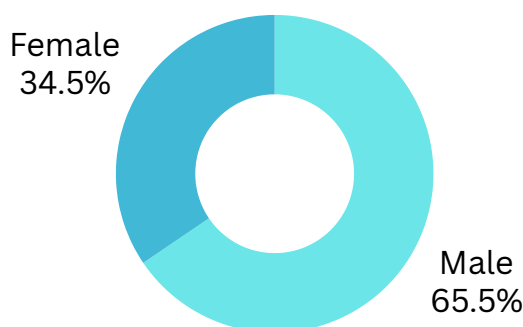
Years of Potential Life Lost (YPPLL) measures how many years of life "lost" when someone dies before reaching age 75. For example, if someone dies at 60 years old, their YPPLL is 15 years. From 2019 to 2021, Madison County had about 6,100 YPPLL, while New York State had 6,400 and the U.S. had 8,000 (Figure 3).

Figure 3: YPPL in Madison County, NYS, and the U.S. (2019-2022)



Men in Madison County are nearly twice as likely as women to die prematurely. In 2023, male residents accounted for about 66% of all premature deaths (Figure 4). While cancer was the leading cause for both male and female residents, males were more likely to die early from heart disease and unintentional injuries.

Figure 4: Percent of Premature Deaths by Biological Sex (2023)



R I S K F A C T O R S

In 2023, the top five causes of death in Madison County—cancer, heart disease, CLRD, stroke, and unintentional injury—accounted for 60% of all deaths. The good news is these deaths can often be prevented or delayed by making healthier choices.

To help prevent or delay chronic conditions like cancer, heart disease, stroke, and CLRD, consider these healthy habits:

1. Quit smoking and other tobacco products
2. Eat more fruit and vegetables
3. Cut back on ultra-processed foods with high fat and salt
4. Reduce or eliminate alcohol use
5. Increase physical activity

To lower the risk of death due to unintentional injuries, consider the following:

1. Reduce or eliminate substance use
2. Practice safe driving (use seatbelts, follow speed limits)
3. Follow safety rules at work and during sports/recreation activity (e.g. wear protective gear like helmets, swim with a lifeguard)
4. Keep firearms stored safely
5. Use a cane, walker, or medical alert system to prevent falls at older age

Making these changes can help save lives and improve overall health.

M E T H O D O L G Y

The leading causes of death are based on the frequency of deaths from specific diseases. This report uses the tenth revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) classification and the New York State Leading Causes of Death Dashboard for categorization of diseases. Data on deaths in Madison County, NY, was provided by the New York State Department of Health through the Health Commence System.



References

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