

# TARRANT COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DATA BRIEF



## BIRTH DEFECTS IN TARRANT COUNTY

- The Texas Birth Defects Registry uses **active surveillance** to collect data for monitored birth defects diagnosed prenatally or after delivery for **all pregnancy outcomes** (live births, spontaneous fetal deaths, and induced pregnancy terminations) at all lengths of gestation.
- In 2012-2014 Tarrant County had a rate of **832 birth defects per 10,000 live births**, which was significantly higher than Texas (574 per 10,000 live births). This difference may be due to diagnostic resources available in Tarrant County as well as differences in regional practices and data quality across the state.
- 65%** of Tarrant County birth defects occurred in the **cardiac and circulatory system**; the most common birth defect in 2012-2014 was atrial septal defect, accounting for 18% of all birth defects.
- In 2012-2016 **birth defects was the leading cause of death among infants** (<1 year of age) for Tarrant County overall (22.3%) and across all race/ethnicity groups—the next leading cause of death was prematurity/low birth weight (13.8%).

**Tarrant County has the highest rate of birth defects among large Texas counties\***

Figure 1. Birth defects among the five most populous Texas counties, 2012-2014\*

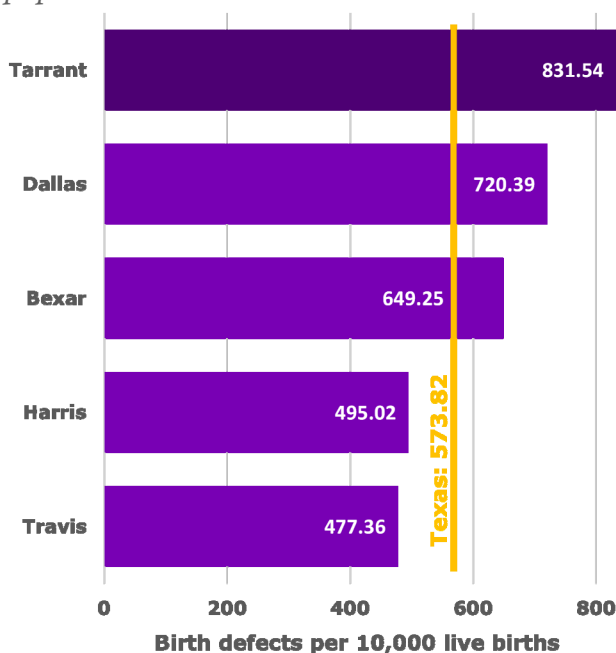
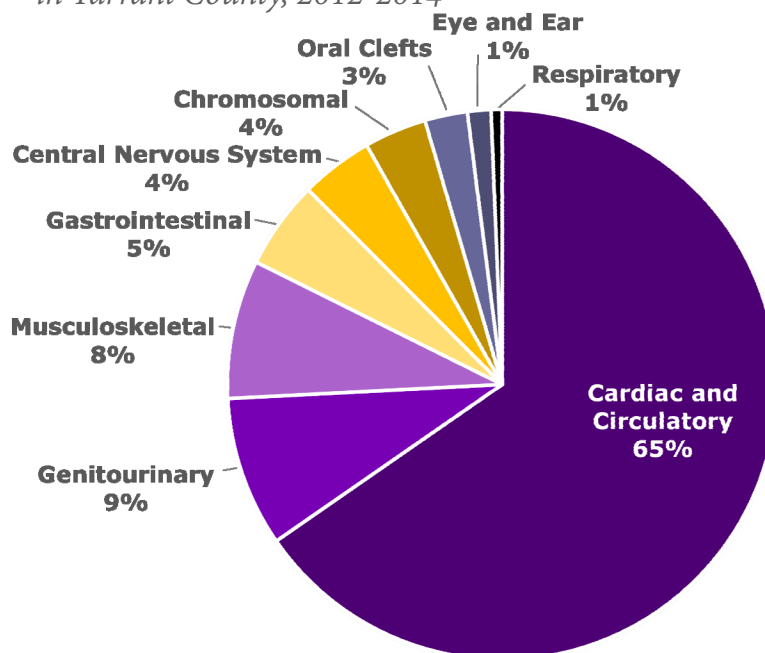


Figure 2. Proportion of birth defects by body system in Tarrant County, 2012-2014



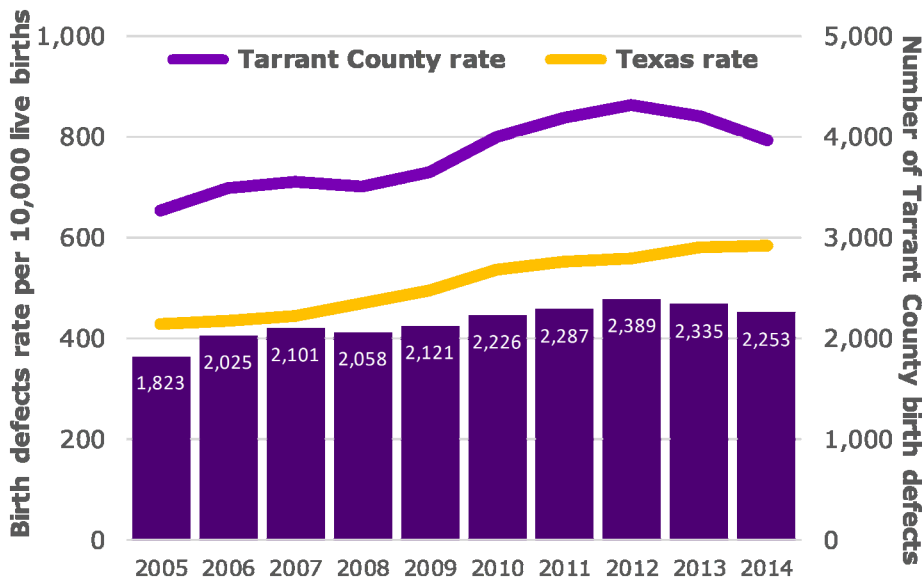
\*Differences may be due to diagnostic resources available as well as differences in regional practices and data quality

All significant differences detected at the 95% confidence level

Data sources: Texas Department of State Health Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Data Brief provided by: Division of Epidemiology and Health Information

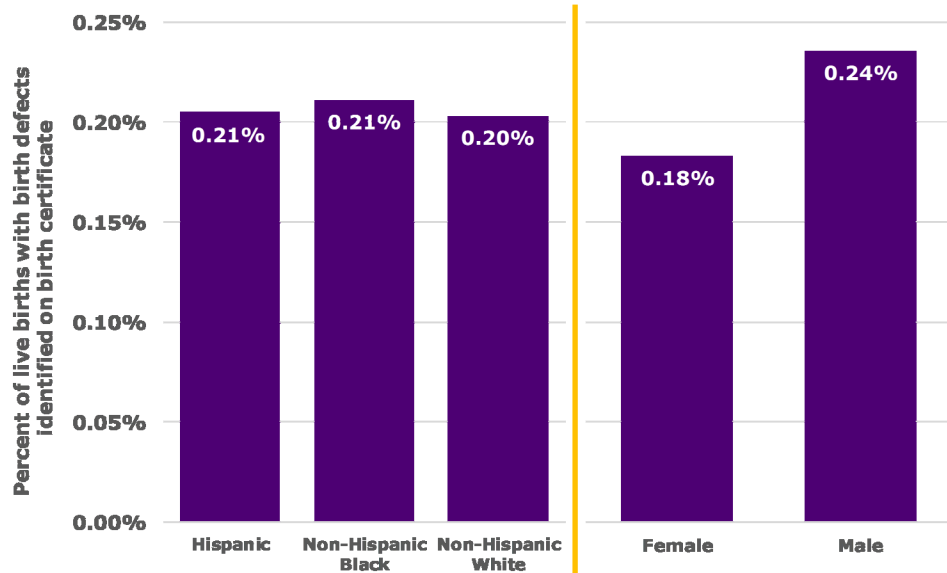
Figure 3. Birth defects among Tarrant County and Texas residents, 2005-2014



*The rate of birth defects in Tarrant County was consistently higher than the rate for Texas each year from 2005-2014*

Figure 4. Birth defects by race/ethnicity and gender among Tarrant County live births, 2012-2014<sup>†</sup>

*A higher percentage of males have birth defects compared to females*



<sup>†</sup>Includes birth defects documented on birth certificates only

<p><b>Healthy choices to help prevent birth defects:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get 400 mcg of folic acid every day</li> <li>• See a healthcare professional regularly</li> <li>• Reach and maintain a healthy weight</li> <li>• Keep diabetes under control</li> <li>• Avoid alcohol at any time during pregnancy</li> <li>• Avoid smoking cigarettes</li> <li>• Avoid marijuana and other drugs</li> <li>• Prevent infections during pregnancy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Resources available at Tarrant County Public Health</b> (<a href="http://health.tarrantcounty.com">http://health.tarrantcounty.com</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chronic Disease Prevention</b> (education to prevent and/or manage diabetes, hypertension, obesity, nutrition, and tobacco use)</li> <li>• <b>For Her Health Women’s Clinic</b> (Pap tests, family planning, referrals)</li> <li>• <b>Adult Health Services</b> (testing, education, outreach, and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases)</li> </ul>
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