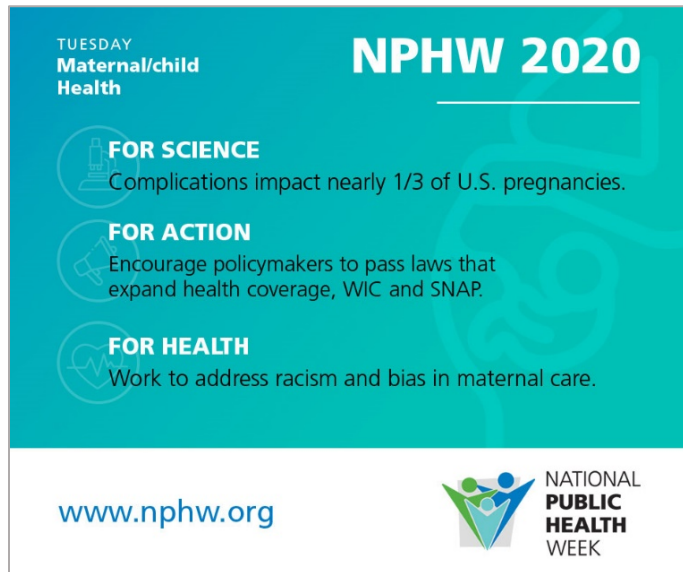


## Maternal and Child Health

The United States has the highest national spending on health care yet ranks low among its peers for maternal and infant mortality, two indicators of the health of a country. Thirty-one percent of women who will become pregnant and give birth in the U.S. will face pregnancy complications.<sup>1</sup>

Approximately 25% of women in the U.S. do not receive the appropriate number of prenatal appointments with a health provider, but the percentage is even higher among black women (32%) and American Indian/Alaska Native women (41%).<sup>2</sup>




**TUESDAY**  
**Maternal/child Health**

# NPHW 2020

- FOR SCIENCE**  
Complications impact nearly 1/3 of U.S. pregnancies.
- FOR ACTION**  
Encourage policymakers to pass laws that expand health coverage, WIC and SNAP.
- FOR HEALTH**  
Work to address racism and bias in maternal care.

[www.nphw.org](http://www.nphw.org)



**NATIONAL  
PUBLIC  
HEALTH  
WEEK**

**In Vermont, 24 percent of women smoked cigarettes in the three months prior to pregnancy; 68 percent of women drank alcohol during the three months before pregnancy; 20 percent reported having depression at some point during pregnancy; and 42 percent of women returning to work did not have paid leave.**<sup>3</sup>

The **Vermont Public Health Association** believes that all women should have access to a system of reproductive health services that is accessible, affordable, comprehensive, and of high quality. Full access to these services should not be jeopardized by the public political, moral, and religious-based debates on the availability and affordability of quality reproductive health services for women.<sup>4</sup>

Encourage policymakers to pass laws that address **access** to prenatal and perinatal care for mothers and babies, enabling the use of medical services that assist with pregnancy care and also healthy habits. Eliminate the work and income requirements that are barriers to prenatal care and improved nutrition. Expand Medicaid for pregnant women and children. **Advocate** for programs that support breastfeeding.

**Advocate** for policies that address maternal health gaps and create programs and funding sources to address gaps in care, education, access and resources. Provide technical assistance and funding for states to allow them to create their own review boards for mortality related to pregnancy.<sup>5</sup>

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on pregnant women and newborns need to be better understood. For the latest research and guidance for physicians, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/pregnant-women-faq.html>. The Kaiser Family Foundation's issue brief on special considerations for pregnant women can be found at <https://www.kff.org/womens-health-policy/issue-brief/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-special-considerations-for-pregnant-women/>.

<sup>1</sup> [HealthyPeople.gov](http://HealthyPeople.gov)

<sup>2</sup> [Maternal Health Task Force at the Harvard Chan School](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Vermont Department of Health](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Vermont Public Health Association](#)

<sup>5</sup> [California Maternity Quality Care Collaborative](#)