

A new report looking at the prevalence of premature births in the U-S shows Arkansas with one of the highest rates in the nation. The annual report from the March of Dimes gives the state an “F” when it comes to preterm births. Erin Gildner, associate director of the Maternal Health Coalition, says Arkansas fares significantly worse than other states

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“...and infant health.”

The report finds Black, American Indian and Alaska Native women are up to 60% more likely to give birth preterm compared to white women, and are twice as likely to see their children die before their first birthday. Gildner says ensuring access to medical care during and after pregnancy is one of the best ways to combat the problem.

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“...in the U.S.”

According to the report, about 19 percent of women in Arkansas did not have adequate prenatal care. That’s defined as women not getting medical attention until their fifth month of pregnancy or later, or having less than half of the number of appropriate doctors’ visits during pregnancy.

Arkansas has one of the highest rates of premature births in the nation. That's according to the 2021 Report Card from the March of Dimes, which grades the state as an "F" when it comes to preterm births. Erin Gildner is associate director of the Maternal Health Coalition. She says Arkansas is not doing well, despite its rate of preterm births improving slightly.

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"...this failing grade."

Preterm birth rates worsened in Pulaski, Faulkner and Craighead counties, while Benton County in northwest Arkansas saw its rate improve slightly. In Arkansas, Black mothers are 46% more likely to give birth prematurely than any other race or ethnicity in the state. Gildner encourages pregnant women to seek adequate prenatal care as one of the most effective ways to prevent premature birth.