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1979

ABORTION

NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
HEALTH PLANNING AND RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
HEALTH DATA SERVICES
VS10 - 8106

ABORTION DATA INDEX

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INTRODUCTION

In 1975 a regulation (NJAC 8:40-4.3 and 8:40-5.1) was enacted requiring the New Jersey State Department of Health to collect data on induced abortions performed in hospitals and licensed outpatient abortion facilities. The regulation defines "abortion" to mean the expulsion or removal from the uterus of the products of conception (the embryo or nonviable fetus). As used in this report, the term abortion applies from the moment of conception up to and including the 20th menstrual week of gestation, and those terminations after the 20th menstrual week which are intended to produce a nonviable fetus.

The Department in cooperation with the State Board of Medical Examiners, the New Jersey Obstetrical and Gynecological Society, and the Medical Society of New Jersey adopted the following guidelines made necessary by the United States Supreme Court's decision regarding abortions. The guidelines provide that first trimester abortions (first 12 weeks of gestation) may be performed on an ambulatory basis by qualified physicians operating in their private offices and that family planning services must be made available to patients upon request. Second and third trimester pregnancies (13 or more weeks of gestation) may be performed only in hospitals. Third trimester abortions are allowed only to preserve the life or health of the mother, or where it has been determined late in pregnancy that there is a nonviable or deformed fetus incapable of extrauterine survival.

The Department collects data on induced abortions performed in all licensed abortion facilities in the State but does not provide a vehicle to collect induced abortions performed by physicians operating within their private offices.

Abortions performed in hospitals and licensed outpatient abortion facilities must be reported to the Department on a Monthly Abortion/Induced Pregnancy Termination Report within 10 days after the close of the month the procedure was performed. The form is designed to provide data which can serve as a basic resource for health professional decisions relating to abortions, in planning abortion services and in providing family planning services. The form includes basic information about age, marital status, municipality of residence, race, prior number of pregnancies and prior live births. Clinical information is limited to gestation period at termination and method of termination. Patients names are never divulged and therefore no record is personally identifiable.

Since the initiation of the abortion reporting mechanism in 1975, the number of reports received by the New Jersey Department of Health has risen substantially. This report presents the tabulated results of all 1979 data collected by the Department. Data for years prior to 1979 are incomplete due to underreporting.

Induced Abortions Reported in New Jersey, 1979, is the first report containing data for induced abortions occurring in licensed facilities in the State. The information presented in the report includes a narrative summary regarding the county and facility where the abortion was performed, as well as characteristics of the women obtaining abortions in New Jersey. Tables and charts are included to illustrate these summary data. Data for this report came from information provided to the Department on report forms completed by medical record clerks or nursing personnel at the site where the abortion was performed.

In compliance with the New Jersey law, every physician performing an induced abortion in a licensed facility in the State was required to report the procedure to the Department, within 10 days after the close of the month the abortion was performed, on forms provided by the Department. These forms were processed monthly and a yearly summary report was compiled.

The statistics presented in this report are for induced abortions occurring in New Jersey licensed facilities only. Data can be obtained for residents obtaining abortions in other states from the National Center for Disease Control.

OVERVIEW

Selected Characteristics

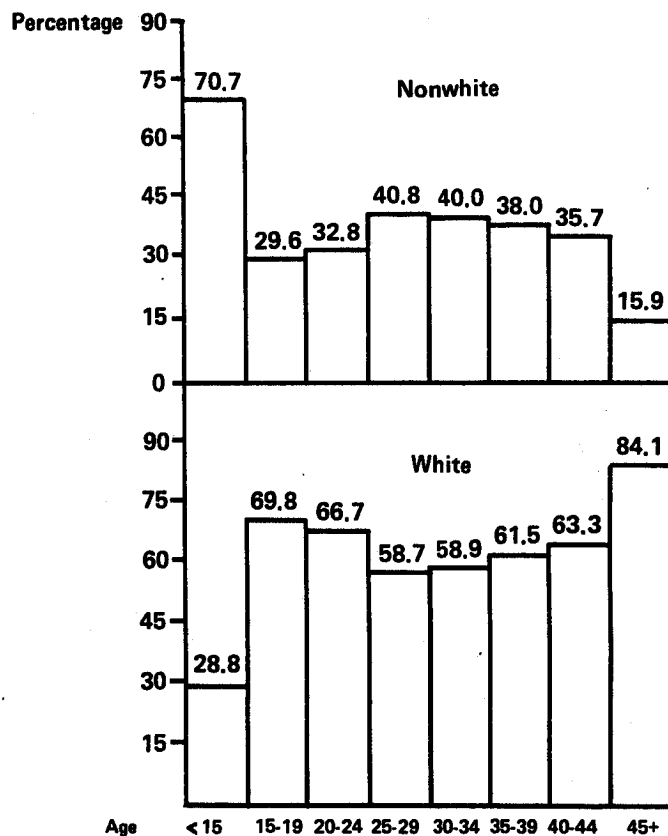
In 1979, a woman who obtained an induced abortion in New Jersey tended to be young, white, single, childless, a resident of the State and early in pregnancy at the time of the procedure. Women less than 25 years of age accounted for 60.5 percent of the induced abortions performed. 64.4 percent were white and 71.5 percent were unmarried. Over 50 percent had no living children and 90.8 percent of the women underwent abortions during the first 12 weeks of gestation. Sharp and suction curettage were the procedures most commonly used in over 90 percent of the induced abortion cases. An abortion clinic was the primary type of facility used in 1979, accounting for 71.4 percent of all induced abortions performed.

Age

Of the 24,714 abortions recorded the largest percentage (33.7) were performed on women between the ages 20-24 years with 25.9 percent of abortions being received by women between 15-19 years of age. Less than one percent of the women receiving abortions in 1979 were under 15 years of age. 2.1 percent of the recorded induced abortions in the State were for women aged 40-44 years, with 44 (0.2 percent) terminations reported in the 44 and over age group.

The induced abortion ratio (number of recorded induced abortions per 1,000 recorded live births) varies with respect to age. Females at either extreme of the child bearing years had the highest induced abortion ratios. The induced abortion ratios declined from a high of 692 induced abortions per 1,000 live births for women under 15 years to a low of 157 for women aged 25-29 years, then peaked at 797 for women 40 years and older. The New Jersey abortion ratio for all women was 262 abortions per 1,000 live births in 1979 resulting in one abortion reported for every 3.8 live births.

Induced Abortions Recorded in New Jersey by Patients Age and Race, 1979



Race

Of the women who obtained an induced abortion in New Jersey 15,905 (64.4 percent) were white and 8,659 (35.0 percent) were nonwhite. In less than one percent of the reported cases, the race of the woman was not stated. Although the number of induced abortions to white women accounted for the majority of induced abortions in 1979, the induced abortion ratio for nonwhite females was greater than twice the magnitude of that for white females. The induced abortion ratio for nonwhites was 447 induced abortions per 1,000 nonwhite live births, while the corresponding figure for whites was 218 induced abortions per 1,000 white live births.

Marital Status

Of the 24,714 induced abortions, reported, 71.5 percent were performed on women who were unmarried at the time of the procedure. Induced abortions occurred more frequently among unmarried women than married women for all age groups less than 30 years of age, while for women 30 years of age and older the majority of induced abortions were to married women.

Prior Number of Live Births

The percentage of women receiving abortions in 1979 was inversely related to the number of live births. The percentages ranged from a high of 55.1 percent of the induced abortions performed on women with no live births to a low of 1.4 percent for women having four or more live births. Women with only one prior live birth accounted for 147 induced abortions per 1,000 live births, the lowest induced abortion ratio among all women. The highest induced abortion ratio was for women with no prior live births, 333 induced abortions per 1,000 live births. Induced abortion ratios of 264, 307 and 273 induced abortions per 1,000 live births were recorded to women with two, three, or four prior live births, respectively.

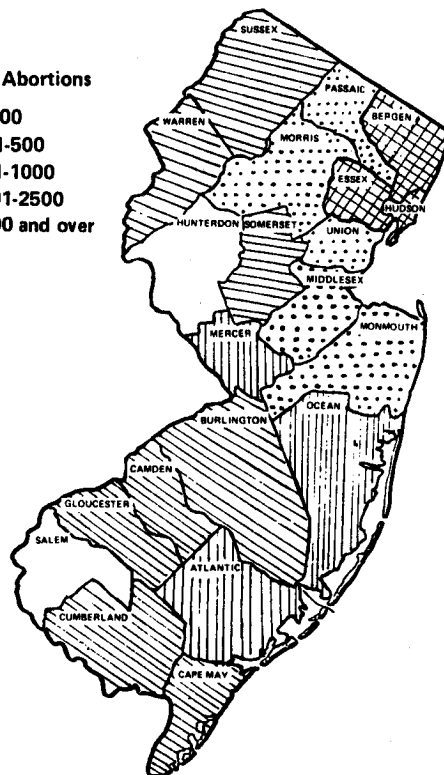
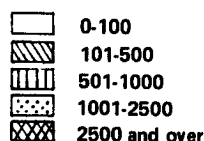
Place of Residence

Of the women who obtained induced abortions in New Jersey, 97.6 percent were residents of the State. There were 235 reported induced abortions performed on out-of-state residents representing approximately 1.0 percent of the total. Nonresidents who obtained an induced abortion were representative of 18 states, the District of Columbia and some foreign countries. The most frequently reported of these women were residents of New York and Pennsylvania, the two major states surrounding New Jersey. Residents of New York accounted for 56.2 percent (132) of all nonresident abortions recorded in New Jersey, while Pennsylvania recorded 28.1 percent (66).

Place of Occurrence

The 24,132 resident abortions were performed in all 21 counties. In the northern half of the state the counties of Bergen, Essex and Hudson had the largest percentage of induced abortions recorded in the State, registering 15.6, 19.1, and 17.8 percent, respectively. In the southern section Atlantic and Ocean counties had the largest number of recorded induced abortions.

Number of Abortions



Induced Abortions Recorded in New Jersey
by County of Occurrence, 1979

Type of Procedure

Sharp and suction curettage were the primary surgical procedures most commonly used to terminate pregnancies. Sharp curettage accounted for the majority (51.7 percent) of all procedures used followed by suction curettage (44.5 percent) and saline instillation (2.0 percent).

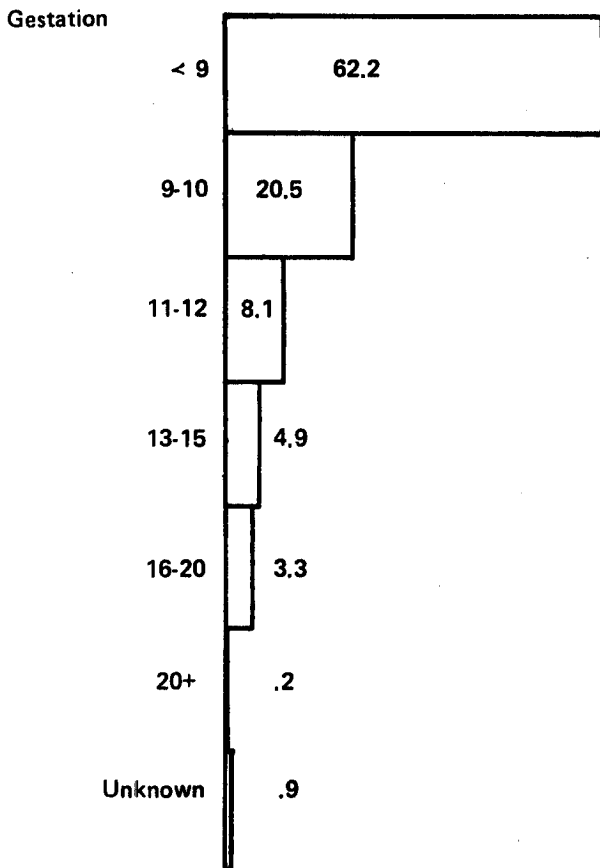
The data clearly show a relationship between operative procedure and gestation. For pregnancies less than 16 weeks sharp and suction curettage were the methods most commonly used, while for pregnancies 16 weeks and over saline instillation was the predominant procedure. Sharp curettage accounted for 52.3 percent and suction curettage 46.2 percent of the induced abortion with gestation less than 16 weeks. Saline instillation accounted for 50.5 percent of the induced abortions performed after 16 weeks of pregnancy.

Weeks of Gestation

Of the 24,714 induced abortions reported, 22,436 (90.8 percent) were performed during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. 2,019 (8.2 percent) of the women obtained induced abortions during the 13-20 week gestation period, while less than one-half of one percent obtained later induced abortions of over 20 week gestation.

Approximately 75 percent of women receiving abortions in the first trimester of pregnancy were 20 years of age and older. 25.4 percent were under 20 years of age. Women aged 20-24 years comprised the greatest percentage (33.9 percent) of women receiving induced abortions during the gestation period of less than 13 weeks.

Induced Abortions Recorded in New Jersey by Gestation, 1979



Type of Facility

In 1979, induced abortion reports were received from both hospital and licensed abortion clinics. Of the total induced abortions reported, 17,658 (71.4 percent) were performed in abortion clinics, compared with 7,056 (28.6 percent) performed in hospitals.

Number of Previous Abortions

Of the women who obtained abortions, 25.6 percent reported having received only one previous abortion. 2,241 (9.1 percent) women reported having received two or more prior abortions, while the majority of women (15,549) receiving induced abortions reported never having undergone any prior abortions.

Induced Abortions Recorded in New Jersey by Prior Number of Terminations, 1979



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CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN RECEIVING INDUCED ABORTIONS IN NEW JERSEY
1979

Table 1

Characteristics	Number	Percent	Ratio
TOTAL	24,714	100.0	262
<u>RESIDENCE</u>			
New Jersey	24,132	97.6	262
Out-of-state	235	1.0	174
Unknown	347	1.4	324
<u>AGE</u>			
< 15	198	0.8	692
15-19	6,404	25.9	546
20-24	8,338	33.7	310
25-29	4,802	19.4	157
30-34	2,898	11.7	158
35-39	1,500	6.1	312
40-44	515	2.1	797
Over 44	44	0.2	*
Unknown	15	0.1	14
<u>RACE</u>			
White	15,905	64.4	218
Nonwhite	8,659	35.0	447
Unknown	150	0.6	71
<u>MARITAL STATUS</u>			
Married	6,936	28.1	94
Unmarried	17,682	71.5	915
Unknown	96	0.4	87
<u>NUMBER OF LIVE BIRTHS</u>			
None	13,613	55.1	333
One	4,515	18.3	147
Two	3,768	15.2	264
Three	1,531	6.2	301
Four	511	2.1	273
Over Four	338	1.4	233
Unknown	438	1.8	*

*Greater than 1,000 abortions per 1,000 live births

CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN RECEIVING INDUCED ABORTIONS IN NEW JERSEY
1979

Table 1a

Characteristics	Number	Percent
<u>TYPE OF PROCEDURE</u>		
Suction Curettage (D&C)	11,005	44.5
Sharp Curettage	12,787	51.7
Hysterectomy	6	.02
Hysterotomy	8	.03
Saline Instillation	497	2.0
Prostaglandin Instillation	69	0.3
Other	84	0.3
Unknown	258	1.0
<u>WEEKS OF GESTATION</u>		
< 9	15,362	62.2
9-10	5,061	20.5
11-12	2,013	8.1
13-15	1,203	4.9
16-20	816	3.3
Over 20	47	0.2
Unknown	212	0.9
<u>TYPE OF FACILITY</u>		
Hospitals	7,056	28.6
Clinics	17,658	71.4
<u>NUMBER OF PREVIOUS ABORTIONS</u>		
None	15,549	62.9
One	6,334	25.6
Two	1,659	6.7
Three	404	1.6
Over Three	178	0.7
Unknown	590	2.4

INDUCED ABORTIONS RECORDED IN NEW JERSEY BY COUNTY OF RESIDENCE, RACE AND AGE

1979

Table 2

County of Residence	Total	Race		Unknown	<15	Age							Over 44	Unknown
		White	Nonwhite			15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44			
TOTAL	24,714	15,905	8,659	150	198	6,404	8,338	4,802	2,898	1,500	515	44	15	
Atlantic	958	704	253	1	10	273	375	179	78	30	11	2	0	
Bergen	3,771	3,211	556	4	19	1,148	1,255	609	412	236	80	12	0	
Burlington	224	166	45	13	4	44	63	46	43	17	7	0	0	
Camden	181	127	50	4	3	37	66	37	19	10	7	1	1	
Cape May	363	321	39	3	4	135	130	59	23	10	2	0	0	
Cumberland	307	234	73	0	9	117	93	48	25	10	3	2	0	
Essex	4,615	1,665	2,934	16	51	1,032	1,580	1,034	563	261	87	3	4	
Gloucester	115	94	20	1	1	33	42	19	10	5	5	0	0	
Hudson	4,295	2,157	2,125	13	28	1,023	1,388	933	527	298	97	1	0	
Hunterdon	95	92	2	1	0	34	24	14	11	11	1	0	0	
Mercer	502	282	185	35	5	108	182	101	60	33	11	2	0	
Middlesex	1,282	1,014	266	2	5	297	438	254	167	84	34	3	0	
Monmouth	1,279	1,004	267	8	10	475	415	191	114	47	25	2	0	
Morris	1,233	1,067	160	6	7	297	404	231	160	96	29	6	3	
Ocean	524	492	30	2	4	171	170	86	55	34	4	0	0	
Passaic	1,912	1,108	799	5	15	400	688	405	235	127	38	4	0	
Salem	25	22	3	0	4	5	10	5	1	0	0	0	0	
Somerset	457	402	55	0	3	127	154	87	44	31	9	1	1	
Sussex	231	221	7	3	0	63	66	38	43	16	4	1	0	
Union	1,614	916	681	17	14	397	544	288	214	107	47	3	0	
Warren	149	138	11	0	2	47	54	21	16	6	3	0	0	
Out-of-state	235	185	49	1	0	50	74	57	34	14	5	1	0	
Unknown	347	283	49	15	0	91	123	60	44	17	6	0	6	

INDUCED ABORTIONS RECORDED IN NEW JERSEY AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY
AGE, RACE, MARITAL STATUS, GESTATION AND TYPE OF FACILITY

1979

Table 3

	Total	Percent	Hospital Number	Percent	Clinic Number	Percent
<u>AGE</u>						
Total	24,714	100.0	7,056	100.0	17,658	100.0
< 15	198	0.8	62	0.9	136	0.8
15-19	6,404	25.9	1,064	15.1	5,340	30.2
20-24	8,338	33.7	1,903	27.0	6,435	36.4
25-29	4,802	19.4	1,721	24.4	3,081	17.4
30-34	2,898	11.7	1,296	18.4	1,602	9.1
35-39	1,500	6.1	704	10.0	796	4.5
40-44	515	2.1	267	3.8	248	1.4
Over 44	44	0.2	31	0.4	13	0.1
Unknown	15	0.1	8	0.1	7	-
<u>RACE</u>						
Total	24,714	100.0	7,056	100.0	17,658	100.0
White	15,905	64.4	3,803	53.9	12,102	68.5
Nonwhite	8,659	35.0	3,127	44.3	5,532	31.3
Unknown	150	0.6	126	1.8	24	0.1
<u>MARITAL STATUS</u>						
Total	24,714	100.0	7,056	100.0	17,658	100.0
Married	6,936	28.1	2,954	41.9	3,982	22.6
Unmarried	17,682	71.5	4,025	57.0	13,657	77.3
Unknown	96	0.4	77	1.1	19	0.1
<u>GESTATION</u>						
Total	24,714	100.0	7,056	100.0	17,658	100.0
< 9	15,362	62.2	4,462	63.2	10,900	61.7
9-10	5,061	20.5	1,191	16.9	3,870	21.9
11-12	2,013	8.1	602	8.5	1,411	8.0
13-15	1,203	4.9	83	1.2	1,120	6.3
16-20	816	3.3	483	6.8	333	1.9
Over 20	47	0.2	47	0.7	0	-
Unknown	212	0.9	188	2.7	24	0.1

INDUCED ABORTIONS RECORDED IN NEW JERSEY BY AGE, PRIMARY PROCEDURE AND LENGTH OF GESTATION
1979

Table 4

	Total	Week of Gestation						Unknown
		< 9	9-10	11-12	13-15	16-20	20+	
AGE								
Total	24,714	15,362	5,061	2,013	1,203	816	47	212
< 15	198	77	49	28	16	28	0	0
15-19	6,404	3,397	1,445	705	490	324	18	25
20-24	8,338	5,232	1,734	641	411	251	16	53
25-29	4,802	3,247	913	335	158	96	4	49
30-34	2,898	2,044	522	165	67	54	3	43
35-39	1,500	997	284	96	45	47	3	28
40-44	515	329	108	39	12	16	3	8
Over 44	44	34	4	2	4	0	0	0
Unknown	15	5	2	2	0	0	0	6
PRIMARY PROCEDURE								
Total	24,714	15,362	5,061	2,013	1,203	816	47	212
Sharp Curettage	12,787	7,650	2,595	1,147	982	317	2	94
Suction Curettage	11,005	7,574	2,416	805	129	12	0	69
Hysterectomy	6	2	1	1	0	2	0	0
Hysterotomy	8	1	0	1	1	4	1	0
Saline Instillation	497	1	0	32	26	403	33	2
Prostaglandin Instillation	69	2	0	0	9	48	8	2
Other	84	2	0	2	54	23	3	0
Unknown	258	130	49	25	2	7	0	45

DEFINITIONS

ABORTION - premature expulsion or removal from the uterus of the products of conception (the embryo or nonviable fetus).

FIRST TRIMESTER - first twelve menstrual weeks of pregnancy, as determined by the history given by the patient considered in conjunction with the physician's estimation of length of pregnancy by clinical examination of the size of the uterus.

SECOND AND THIRD TRIMESTERS - pregnancy 13 or more menstrual weeks, as determined by the history given by the patient and the physician's findings or clinical examination of the size of the uterus before the abortion, and/or the size of the fetus as examined after the abortion.

HOSPITAL - health care facility licensed as a hospital in accordance with the statutes of New Jersey.

OUTPATIENT ABORTION FACILITY - licensed health care facility other than a hospital, in which abortion procedures are performed.

SUCTION CURETTAGE - dilation of cervix and removal of the products of conception.

SHARP CURETTAGE - dilation of cervix and removal of the products surgically by a sharp curettage.

HYSTERECTOMY - excision of the uterus.

HYSTEROTOMY - incision of the uterus to remove the fetus before viability.

SALINE INSTILLATION - second-trimester method of induced abortion, usually performed at or after 16 weeks of pregnancy, by instilling a concentrated salt solution into the amniotic sac by a needle inserted through the abdominal wall.

PROSTAGLANDIN - second-trimester abortion induced by prostaglandin, usually by injection into the uterine cavity through a needle inserted through the abdominal wall.