



Americans Recognize the Drivers of Pregnancy-Related Deaths, but Knowledge Gaps Remain Around Prevention and Mental Health

Topline Findings

October 16, 2026 - New survey findings from March of Dimes, with data collection by Ipsos, show that Americans aged 18 and older recognize social, economic, and healthcare factors as contributors to pregnancy-related deaths, while many remain uncertain about how many pregnancy-related deaths are preventable and how many of these deaths primarily caused by mental health conditions involve suicide.

Detailed Findings

Support Available to Mothers

Americans aged 18 and older express mixed views about seven statements about whether mothers with minor children (children under the age of 18) have access to varying types of support and resources.

- At least half of American adults aged 18 and older surveyed express agreement (somewhat or strongly agree) with the following statements about mothers with minor children: *have access to healthcare* (59%), *have access to other mothers* (52%), *have people in their lives to offer emotional support* (51%), and *have people they can talk to when needed* (50%).
- The remaining statements queried received the least agreement, as less than half of Americans surveyed strongly or somewhat agree that mothers with minor children *feel supported by people around them* (47%), *have opportunities to take time for themselves* (42%), and *have help with children* (41%).

Challenges Affecting Pregnant Women

Americans aged 18 and older identify social and economic conditions, along with healthcare affordability as the biggest challenges affecting pregnant women in the US today.

- At least two in five American adults 18+ surveyed indicate the following are the biggest challenges affecting pregnant women in the U.S.: *social and economic factors such as income, housing, transportation, or paid leave* (48%), *rising healthcare costs* (45%), and *lack of access to affordable healthcare* (40%).
- Other biggest challenges affecting pregnant women selected by approximately one in five American adults surveyed include *lack of information or education about maternal health* (20%), *differences in healthcare experiences and treatment based on race or ethnicity* (18%), *differences in access to care based on where someone lives* (18%), *underlying health conditions and pregnancy complications* (18%), and *individual health behaviors or choices* (16%).
- Just over one in five (6%) American adults 18+ surveyed *don't believe that pregnant women in the US face any significant challenges* and 8% are *not sure* what the biggest challenges are.



Knowledge and Awareness

Many Americans are uncertain about key facts related to pregnancy-related deaths in the U.S.

- After being read a definition about pregnancy-related deaths, more than two in five Americans surveyed (44%) express being *not* sure what percentage of pregnancy-related deaths are preventable, while 14% indicate they believe 0-29% are *preventable*, 14% state 30-59%, and 28% indicate 60-100% are *preventable*.
- When asked about the percentage of pregnancy-related deaths where a mental health condition is the primary cause, involve suicide, one in two Americans surveyed (51%) indicate they are *not* sure, while 15% indicate 0-29% *involve suicide*, 19% indicate 30-59%, and 15% stated 60-100% *involve suicide*.
- Nearly six in ten American adults aged 18 and older (56%) are *very or somewhat aware* with the statement “some groups of moms in the U.S. face higher risks of pregnancy-related death due to non-medical issues such as unequal access to care and other social or economic factors,” while 24% state they are *not very aware*, 12% state *not at all aware*, and 8% are *not sure*.

Risk Factors and Postpartum Support

Americans recognize various factors increase the risk of pregnancy-related death, but less one-third express confidence mothers in need know where to seek postpartum mental health help.

- More than three in four American adults aged 18 and older surveyed agree (strongly or somewhat) that *limited access to high-quality healthcare* (80%) and *low income* (76%) can increase risk of pregnancy-related death, followed next most by *unstable or inadequate housing* (72%), and *lack of reliable transportation* (62%).
- Less than three in ten American adults 18+ surveyed (28%) are *very or somewhat confident* with the statement “most mothers experiencing mental health challenges after childbirth know where to seek help,” with 39% indicating they are *not too confident*, 24% *not at all confident*, and 9% *not sure*.
- Nearly six in ten American adults aged 18 and older surveyed (59%) indicate they find the statement “*according to data collected by the CDC, nearly 60% of pregnancy-related-deaths occur between one week and one year after childbirth*” *very or somewhat surprising*, with 25% indicating *not very surprising*, 14% *not at all surprising*, and 2% who state *I already knew this*.

These findings are based on a March of Dimes survey, with data collection provided by Ipsos, conducted between September 30 and October 1, 2026. For this survey, a nationally representative sample of 1,005 U.S. adults aged 18 and older were surveyed online in English as part of the Ipsos omnibus. The results of this research have a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.8 percentage points for all respondents.

For full results, please refer to the following annotated questionnaire:

Full Annotated Questionnaire

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Multi-select questions may total more than 100%.

Q1. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about mothers with children under the age of 18 in the United States today. [ITEMS A-D RANDOMIZED; SCALE FLIP ROTATED FROM POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE, NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE 50/50]

a. Have people in their lives to offer emotional support

	Total (n=1005)
Strongly agree	15%
Somewhat agree	36%
Neutral	34%
Somewhat disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	5%

b. Have help with childcare

	Total (n=1005)
Strongly agree	17%
Somewhat agree	24%
Neutral	32%
Somewhat disagree	16%
Strongly disagree	10%

c. Have people they can talk to when needed

	Total (n=1005)
Strongly agree	19%
Somewhat agree	32%
Neutral	30%
Somewhat disagree	15%
Strongly disagree	5%

Q1. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about mothers with children under the age of 18 in the United States today. [ITEMS A-D RANDOMIZED; SCALE FLIP ROTATED FROM POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE, NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE 50/50]

d. Have access to healthcare

	Total (n=1005)
Strongly agree	23%
Somewhat agree	35%
Neutral	23%
Somewhat disagree	14%
Strongly disagree	5%

e. Have opportunities to take time for themselves

	Total (n=1005)
Strongly agree	15%
Somewhat agree	27%
Neutral	25%
Somewhat disagree	22%
Strongly disagree	11%

f. Have access to other mothers

	Total (n=1005)
Strongly agree	15%
Somewhat agree	36%
Neutral	36%
Somewhat disagree	9%
Strongly disagree	3%

g. Feel supported by people around them

	Total (n=1005)
Strongly agree	14%
Somewhat agree	33%
Neutral	36%
Somewhat disagree	13%
Strongly disagree	4%



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Q2. Which of the following do you believe are the biggest challenges affecting pregnant women in the US today? (Select up to three) [RANDOMIZE]

	Total (n=1005)
Social and economic factors such as income, housing, transportation, or paid leave	48%
Rising healthcare costs	45%
Lack of access to affordable healthcare	40%
Lack of information or education about maternal health	20%
Differences in healthcare experiences and treatment based on race or ethnicity	18%
Differences in access to care based on where someone lives	18%
Underlying health conditions and complications during pregnancy	18%
Individual health behaviors or choices	16%
Something else (please specify)	2%
I don't believe that pregnant women in the U.S. face any significant challenges	6%
Not sure	8%

A pregnancy-related death is the death of a woman during pregnancy or within one year after the end of pregnancy due to pregnancy complications, events initiated by pregnancy, or the worsening of unrelated conditions by pregnancy.

Q3. To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of pregnancy-related deaths in the U.S. do you think are preventable? Please type your best estimate.

_____ %

	Total (n=1005)
0%	0%
1% to 9%	5%
10% to 19%	4%
20% to 29%	5%
30% to 39%	4%
40% to 49%	3%
50% to 59%	8%
60% to 69%	5%
70% to 79%	4%
80% to 89%	6%
90% to 99%	10%
100%	3%
Not sure	44%



Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that each of the following factors can increase the risk of pregnancy-related deaths? [ITEMS A-D RANDOMIZED; SCALE FLIP ROTATED FROM POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE, NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE 50/50]

a. Low income

	Total (n=1005)
Strongly agree	39%
Somewhat agree	36%
Neutral	17%
Somewhat disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	3%

b. Lack of reliable transportation

	Total (n=1005)
Strongly agree	25%
Somewhat agree	38%
Neutral	26%
Somewhat disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	3%

c. Unstable or inadequate housing

	Total (n=1005)
Strongly agree	35%
Somewhat agree	37%
Neutral	22%
Somewhat disagree	4%
Strongly disagree	2%

d. Limited access to high-quality health care

	Total (n=1005)
Strongly agree	48%
Somewhat agree	32%
Neutral	15%
Somewhat disagree	4%
Strongly disagree	1%



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Q5. How confident or not are you that most mothers who experience mental health challenges after childbirth know where to seek help? [SCALE FLIP ROTATED FROM POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE, NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE 50/50]

	Total (n=1005)
Very confident	10%
Somewhat confident	17%
Not too confident	39%
Not confident at all	24%
Not sure	9%

Q6. According to data collected by the CDC, nearly 60% of pregnancy-related deaths occur between one week and one year after childbirth. How surprising or not surprising do you find this information? (Select one) [SCALE FLIP ROTATED FROM POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE, NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE 50/50]

	Total (n=1005)
Very surprising	22%
Somewhat surprising	37%
Not very surprising	25%
Not at all surprising	14%
I already knew this	2%

Q7. To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of pregnancy-related deaths in the U.S., where a mental health condition is identified as the primary cause, involve suicide?

_____ %

	Total (n=1005)
0%	0%
1% to 9%	3%
10% to 19%	5%
20% to 29%	7%
30% to 39%	4%
40% to 49%	6%
50% to 59%	9%
60% to 69%	6%
70% to 79%	5%
80% to 89%	2%
90% to 99%	2%
100%	1%
Not sure	51%



Q8. Prior to this survey, how aware were you that some groups of moms in the U.S. face higher risks of pregnancy-related death due to non-medical issues such as unequal access to care and other social or economic factors? [SCALE FLIP ROTATED FROM POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE, NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE 50/50]

	Total (n=1005)
Very aware	20%
Somewhat aware	36%
Not very aware	24%
Not at all aware	12%
Not sure	8%

Q9. Which of the following best describes you today? [MULTI-SELECT]

(ASKED OF FEMALES 18-64 YEARS OF AGE)	Total (n=376)
Currently pregnant	1%
Trying to become pregnant	3%
Recently gave birth (within the past 12 months)	6%
None of the above	88%
Prefer not to answer	2%

About the Study:

These are findings for research conducted between September 30 and October 1, 2026, by Ipsos on behalf of March of Dimes. For this survey, a sample of 1005 U.S. adults aged 18 years and older were surveyed online in English. Surveys were collected as part of a multi-client omnibus program, where questions on various topics are included in one interview and clients share demographic information collected.

The sample was randomly drawn from Ipsos' online panel, partner online panel sources, and "river" sampling and does not rely on a population frame in the traditional sense. After a sample has been obtained from the Ipsos panel, Ipsos calibrates respondent characteristics to be representative of the U.S. Population using standard procedures such as raking-ratio adjustments. The source of these population targets is U.S. Census March 2025 Current Population Survey (CPS) Supplement. Post-hoc weights were made to the population characteristics on age, gender, region, ethnicity, income, and education.

Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online non-probability surveys. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the survey has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.8 percentage points for all respondents. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Ipsos calculates a design effect (DEFF) for each study based on the variation of the weights, following the formula of Kish (1965). This study had a credibility interval adjusted for design effect of the following: n=1005, DEFF=1.5, adjusted Confidence Interval=+/-3.8 percentage points. Where figures do not sum to 100%, this is due to the effects of rounding.



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