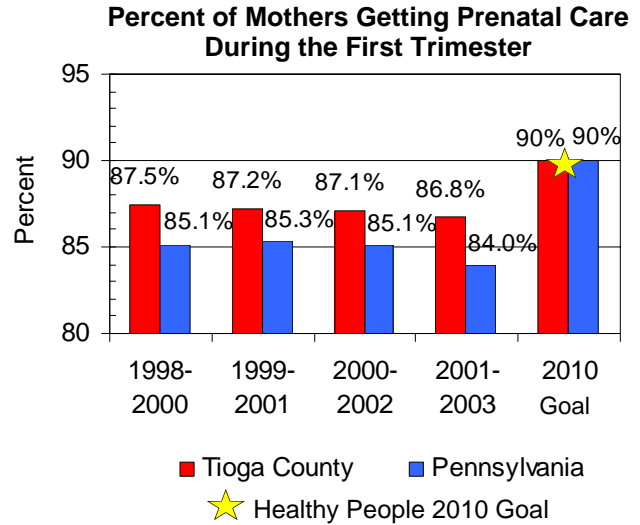


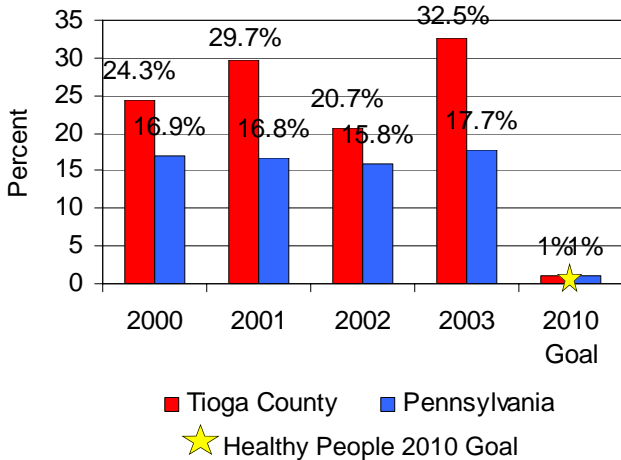
# Maternal & Infant Health Facts

## Why should women get early prenatal care?

Early prenatal care can help reduce newborn illness, disability and death by identifying and reducing certain maternal risk factors that contribute to poor birth outcomes. Approximately 87% of Tioga County women receive prenatal care during the first trimester. Those least likely to receive early prenatal care are mothers with less education and lower incomes.



## Percent of Women Who Smoked During Pregnancy

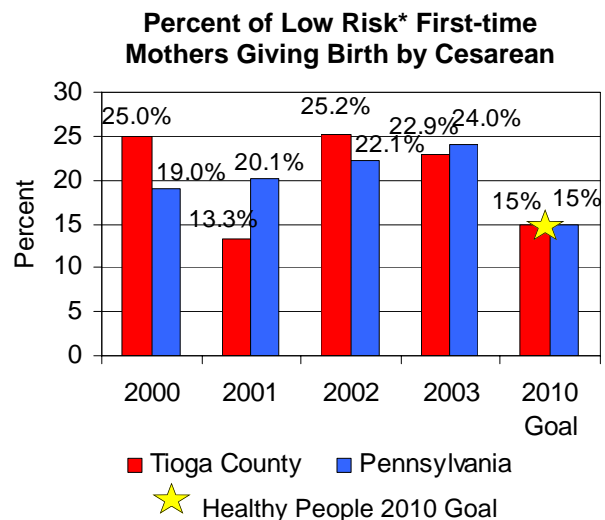


## What are the consequences of smoking cigarettes during pregnancy?

Approximately 1 in 4 babies born in Tioga County has a mother who smoked during pregnancy. Infants with prenatal exposure to tobacco are at a greater risk for poor birth outcomes, including low birth weight, premature delivery, respiratory problems and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

## What is the concern over increases in cesarean sections?

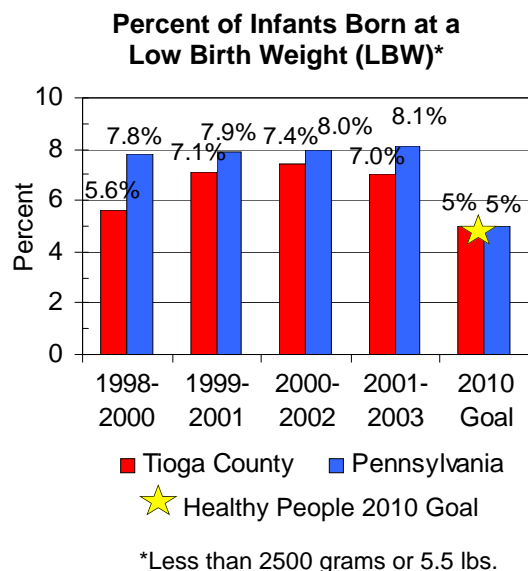
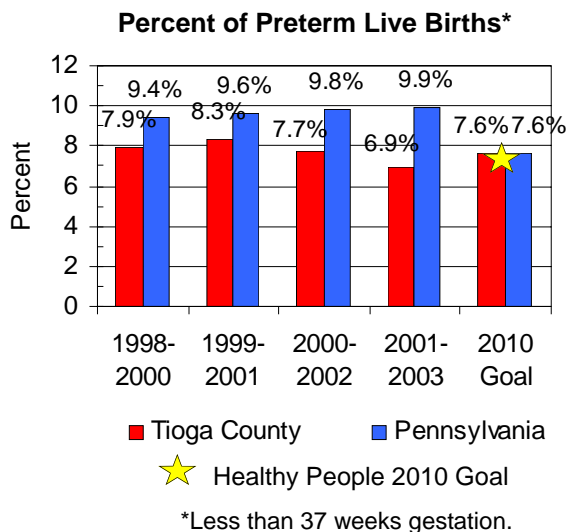
While some cesarean sections are necessary to save the lives of infants and/or mother, some experts believe that half of all C-sections performed are unnecessary. This major abdominal surgery carries greater risks for mother and infant. In addition, it is more painful, requires longer healing time and is more expensive. In Tioga County, approximately 21% of low risk first-time mothers give birth by C-section.



\* full-term, singleton, not breech or malpresentation.

## What are the health risks of a baby born prematurely?

Together with low birth weight, premature births are the leading cause of neonatal death not related to birth defects. If they survive, premature infants are at a higher risk for respiratory distress, neurological problems, bleeding and heart problems. In Tioga County, over the past several years, there has been a decrease in babies born prematurely.



## What are the health risks for a low birth weight baby?

Low birth weight babies are either premature or they are full-term, but small for their age. Children with a low birth weight are at a greater risk for neurological disease, mental retardation, respiratory track infections as well as poor overall health. In past years, Tioga County has seen an increase in the percent of babies born with a low birth weight.

### Actions To Encourage Healthier Living for Moms and Babies:

- Quitting smoking, if she has not done so already. Pennsylvania provides a free quit line to encourage smokers who want to quit. The number is 1-877-724-1090.
- Seeing a physician as soon as she thinks she is pregnant or may become pregnant.
- Eating a well balanced diet, including a folic acid supplement, and exercising regularly.
- Avoiding alcohol and drugs.
- Protecting herself from sexually transmitted diseases and other infections.
- Seeking help if she is in a violent or abusive relationship.
- Asking for support from family and friends when trying to change her lifestyle.

Women seeking assistance in any of these areas should talk with a physician or other health care provider. Contact Guideline at 1-800-332-6718 for referral to the appropriate services.



Data for this fact sheet were taken from a report entitled *Maternal and Infant Health in Tioga County*. For further information regarding this fact sheet or the full report, please call (570) 662 - 4767 or email [lshelham@mansfield.edu](mailto:lshelham@mansfield.edu)