

## Pneumonia continues to be the leading cause of infant deaths in Region XI

*Pneumonia* continues to be the leading cause of infant deaths in Region XI, from 2000 to 2004. In 2005, however, this was replaced by *asphyxia neonatorum*. From the record of the Department of Health XI, *pneumonia* had an average rate of occurrence of 164.0 per 100,000 live births from 2000 to 2004. The rate dropped down to 134.5 per 100,000 live births in 2005, which made it the third among the ten leading causes of infant deaths.

Other common causes of infant mortality were *infection specific to perinatal period*, *respiratory distress syndrome*, *congenital anomaly/malformations*, *septicemia*, *disorder related to length of gestation*, *diarrhea and gastroenteritis*, *heart disease* and *meningitis*.

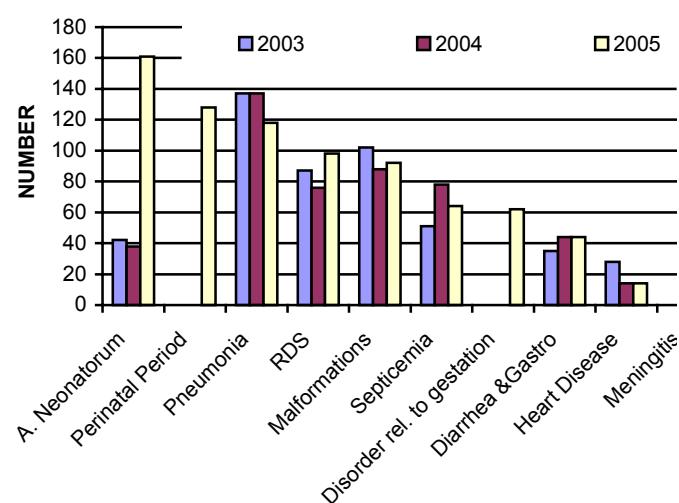
From 2000 to 2004, *pneumonia* was the major cause of infant mortality. This was at peak in 2000 when it represented a rate of occurrence of 196.0 per 100,000 live births. Its average rate of occurrence was 163.3 per 100,000 live births from 2001 to 2004. In 2005, however, *asphyxia neonatorum*, with a jump in its rate of occurrence from 46.1 per 100,000 live births in 2004 to 183.5 in 2005, replaced *pneumonia* as the topmost cause of infant mortality.

Though it was not listed among the ten leading causes during the previous years, *infection specific to perinatal period* ranked second in 2005 with 125 number of cases or 145.9 per 100,000 live births

*Respiratory distress syndrome* ranked fourth leading cause in 2005 with 98 number of cases or 111.7 per 100,000 live births. Fifth leading cause in 2005 was *congenital anomaly/malformations* with 92 registered cases. It was at its peak in 2003 with 102 registered cases. However, *congenital anomaly/malformations* was not listed among the ten top causes of infant mortality in 2001.

*Septicemia* and *diarrhea/gastroenteritis* have been consistent as two of the leading causes of infant deaths, which were ranked in 2005 as sixth and eight, respectively.

**Figure 1. Ten Leading Causes of Infant Mortality, Region XI, 2003 – 2005.**



Not listed in the previous years but listed among the ten leading causes of infant mortality in 2005 was *disorder related to length of gestation*, which was at the seventh rank.

*Heart disease* became one of the top ten causes of infant mortality beginning 2003. It ranked ninth as the top ten causes in year 2005 with 14 number of cases or 16.0 per 100,000 live births.

Completing the list of the ten leading causes of infant deaths in 2005 was *meningitis* with 12 number of cases. It was at its peak in year 2000 with 27 number of cases. However, *meningitis* was not listed among the leading causes of infant mortality in year 2003.

### Definition of Terms:

Infant mortality refers to deaths under one year of age. (NSCB, *Definition of Terms and Concepts Used in RSET*).

*Asphyxia neonatorum* refers to respiratory failure in the newborn, a condition caused by the inadequate intake of oxygen before, during, or just after birth (<http://www.healthofchildren.com>)

**Table 1. Ten Leading Causes of Infant Mortality, Region XI, 2000 – 2005 (Number of cases and Rate per 100,000 live births)**

Cause of Illness	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
Asphyxia Neonatorum	82	75.0	24	23.1	15	19.0	42	56.0	38	46.1	161	183.5
Infection specific to Perinatal Period	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	128	145.9
Pneumonia	210	196.0	179	172.3	102	132.0	137	182.8	137	166.1	118	134.5
Respiratory Distress Syndrome	34	31.0	45	43.3	42	54.0	87	116.1	76	92.2	98	111.7
Congenital Anomaly/Malformations	36	36.0	a/	a/	68	88.0	102	136.1	88	106.7	92	104.9
Septicemia	97	89.0	112	107.8	75	97.0	51	68.0	78	94.6	64	72.9
Disorder related to Length of Gestation	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	62	70.7
Diarrhea & Gastroenteritis	43	40.0	36	34.6	31	40.0	35	46.7	44	53.4	44	70.7
Heart Disease	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	a/	28	37.4	14	17.0	14	16.0
Meningitis	27	25.0	19	18.3	9	12.0	a/	a/	19	23.0	12	13.7

Source: Department of Health XI  
a/ - Not listed among the ten leading causes during the year.