

# Heart Disease Is the Leading Killer of Women

**Heart disease and cancer account for more than half of female deaths.**

Twenty-seven percent of deaths to females in 2005 were due to heart disease. Cancer was the cause of another 22 percent of deaths. Among all deaths due to heart disease in 2005, women accounted for the slight majority. They accounted for slightly less than half of all deaths due to cancer.

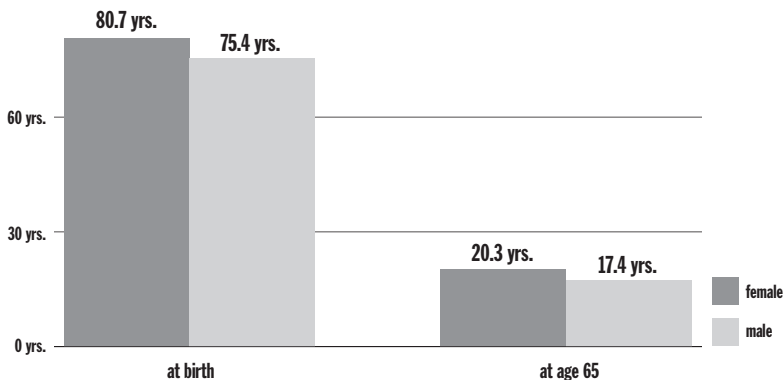
Alzheimer's disease is the seventh leading cause of death, with women accounting for 71 percent of Alzheimer deaths in 2005. Accidents are the fifth leading cause of death, but women account for only 35 percent of accidental deaths.

Female life expectancy stood at 80.7 years in 2006, more than five years greater than the life expectancy of males. At age 65, women can expect to live 20.3 more years, nearly three years more than their male counterparts.

■ Death rates from heart disease have fallen over the past few decades, boosting life expectancy for men and women.

## Females live longer than males

*(average number of years of life remaining at birth and at age 65, by sex, 2006)*



**Table 3.31 Leading Causes of Death, 2005**

(total number of deaths, number of deaths to females, female share of total, and percent distribution of female deaths by cause, for the ten leading causes of death, 2005)

	total	females		
		number	percent of total	percent distribution
<b>Total deaths</b>	<b>2,448,017</b>	<b>1,240,342</b>	<b>50.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
1. Diseases of the heart	652,091	329,250	50.5	26.5
2. Malignant neoplasms (cancer)	559,312	268,890	48.1	21.7
3. Cerebrovascular diseases	143,579	86,993	60.6	7.0
4. Chronic lower respiratory disease	130,933	68,498	52.3	5.5
5. Accidents (unintentional injuries)	117,809	41,434	35.2	3.3
6. Diabetes mellitus	75,119	38,581	51.4	3.1
7. Alzheimer's disease	71,599	51,040	71.3	4.1
8. Influenza and pneumonia	63,001	34,949	55.5	2.8
9. Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, nephrosis	43,901	22,633	51.6	1.8
10. Septicemia	34,136	18,814	55.1	1.5
All other causes	556,537	279,260	50.2	22.5

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, *Deaths: Final Data for 2005*, National Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 56, No. 10, 2008, Internet site <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/deaths.htm>; calculations by New Strategist

## Diversity of Females Varies Sharply by Age

**Hispanics, blacks, and Asians account for a substantial share of the nation's children.**

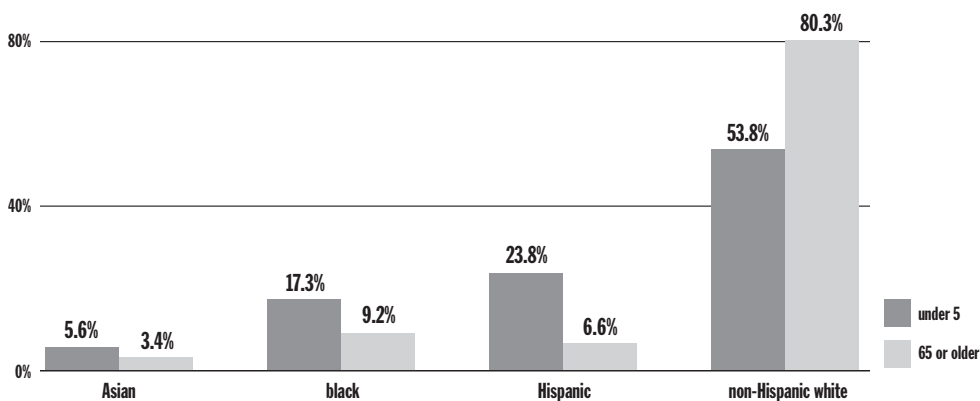
The racial and ethnic composition of American children reveals the nation's future—and that future promises to be far more diverse than the present. Among girls under age 5, Hispanics account for nearly 24 percent of the population. Among women aged 65 or older, only 7 percent are Hispanic. Conversely, 80 percent of women aged 65 or older are non-Hispanic white, a figure that stands at just 54 percent among girls under age 5.

In every racial and ethnic group, males outnumber females among children and young adults, but females increasingly outnumber males with advancing age. Among Hispanics, females are not as numerous as males until the 50-to-54 age group. In contrast, females begin to outnumber males in the 25-to-29 age group among blacks and Asians.

■ As the nation's youth become adults, the diversity of the population will increase rapidly.

### Young girls are much more diverse than older women

*(percent distribution of females under age 5 and aged 65 or older by race and Hispanic origin, 2007)*



**Table 7.5 Females by Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin, 2007**

(total number of females and percent distribution by age, race, and Hispanic origin, 2007; numbers in thousands)

	total		American Indian	Asian	black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian	non-Hispanic white
	number	percent						
<b>Total females</b>	<b>152,962</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>66.3%</b>
Under age 5	10,121	100.0	1.3	5.6	17.3	23.8	0.3	53.8
Aged 5 to 9	9,701	100.0	1.6	5.3	16.9	21.3	0.4	56.5
Aged 10 to 14	9,914	100.0	1.9	5.1	17.0	19.5	0.5	58.2
Aged 15 to 19	10,467	100.0	2.0	4.7	17.1	17.4	0.4	60.5
Aged 20 to 24	10,179	100.0	2.0	5.0	15.8	16.8	0.4	61.8
Aged 25 to 29	10,282	100.0	1.7	6.0	15.3	18.0	0.5	60.3
Aged 30 to 34	9,627	100.0	1.6	7.3	14.7	18.9	0.4	58.9
Aged 35 to 39	10,522	100.0	1.5	6.7	14.2	16.1	0.4	62.7
Aged 40 to 44	11,021	100.0	1.5	5.6	14.0	13.8	0.3	66.3
Aged 45 to 49	11,559	100.0	1.5	4.9	13.2	11.2	0.3	70.0
Aged 50 to 54	10,721	100.0	1.4	4.8	12.5	9.7	0.3	72.4
Aged 55 to 59	9,389	100.0	1.4	4.6	11.7	8.6	0.2	74.4
Aged 60 to 64	7,548	100.0	1.3	4.0	10.3	7.9	0.2	77.1
Aged 65 to 69	5,733	100.0	1.2	4.0	10.4	7.7	0.2	77.3
Aged 70 to 74	4,732	100.0	1.0	3.9	10.2	7.4	0.2	78.0
Aged 75 to 79	4,218	100.0	0.9	3.4	8.9	6.6	0.2	80.6
Aged 80 to 84	3,493	100.0	0.8	2.9	8.1	5.5	0.1	83.1
Aged 85 or older	3,735	100.0	0.8	2.3	7.6	4.9	0.1	84.7
Aged 18 to 24	14,299	100.0	2.0	4.9	16.1	16.8	0.4	61.7
Aged 18 or older	116,878	100.0	1.4	5.0	12.9	12.4	0.3	69.2
Aged 65 or older	21,912	100.0	1.0	3.4	9.2	6.6	0.2	80.3

*Note:* Numbers do not add to total because each racial category includes those who identified themselves as being of the race alone and those who identified themselves as being of the race in combination with other races, and because Hispanics may be of any race. Non-Hispanic whites are those who identified themselves as being white alone and non-Hispanic.

*Source:* Bureau of the Census, National Population Estimates, Internet site <http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/>; calculations by New Strategist