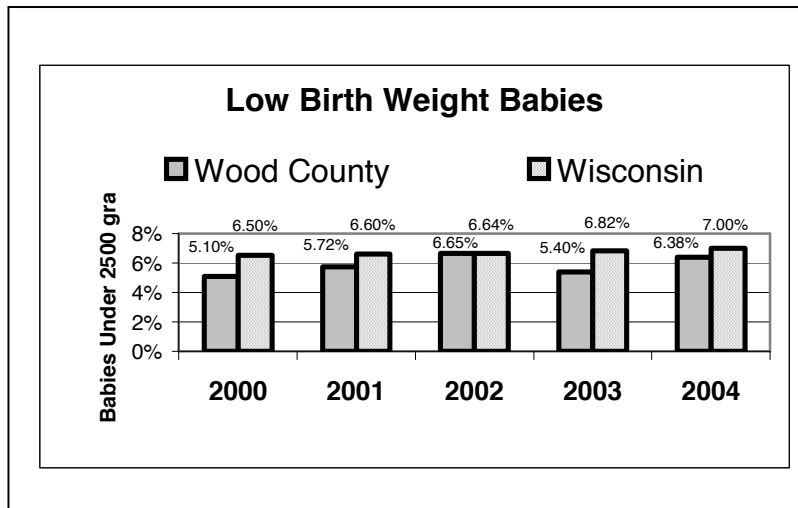


Infant Mortality Declines With Fewer Low Birth Weight Babies



Key Facts

- Babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds (2,500 grams) at birth are considered to be low birth weight.
- Both nationally, and at the state level, the goal is to have less than 5% low birth weight babies.
- Since 1996, Wood County averages a rate of low birth weight babies less than the state average.

Why is this Information Important?

Low birth weight babies often face a number of complications, which may result in increased costs to a community’s health care, and other community support programs. However, today’s medical technology advancements have increased the low birth weight baby survival rate.

Low Birth Weight Babies

Many lifestyle factors contribute to low birth weight babies. Many begin long before a woman becomes pregnant. Examples of risk factors that contribute to low birth weight babies include: smoking, drug and alcohol use, poor maternal health and exposure to environmental toxins or hazards.

Low birth weight babies are at increased risk for many health problems including: chronic illness, vision and hearing impairments and neurodevelopment impairments that lead to life long disabilities. In years past, many tiny and sickly babies would have died. Today, as a result of medical technology advancements, low birth rate numbers have increased and infant mortality has declined.

The incidence of low birth weight babies can be reduced by early prenatal care, including medical, nutritional and supportive services.

Source: Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services