NEW MEXICO EPI BRIEF

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Relationship Between Poverty and 5 of the 10 Leading Causes of Death in New Mexico

Examining socioeconomic disparities and their relationship with health outcomes is critical. Higher rates of poor health outcomes may be seen within populations residing in areas with lower levels of socioeconomic status, poor housing quality, and fewer overall resources. To examine this relationship census tract poverty levels were divided into 6 categories ranging from <5% to ≥40% of the federal poverty level.

Leading Causes of Death Associated with Census Tract Level Poverty by Poverty Category, New Mexico, 2009—2013

Census Tract Level Poverty — ▢ Less than 5% ▨ 5 to 9.9% ■ 10 to 19.9% ■ 20 to 29.9% ■ 30 to 39.9% ■ 40% or more
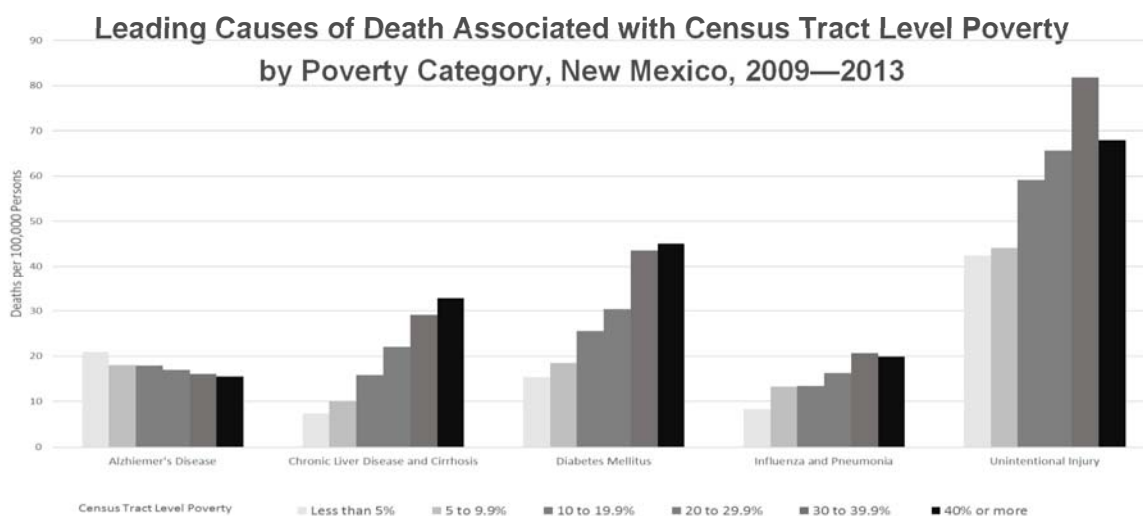
Data Source: Galbraith R. Swift S. Association between census tract level poverty and leading causes of death, New Mexico, 2009-2013. New Mexico Epidemiology. 2016 May. [Access full report here](#).

Five of the 10 leading causes of death were significantly associated with census tract level poverty category and mortality. Diabetes mellitus, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, unintentional injury, and influenza and pneumonia were the leading causes of death most associated with higher poverty levels, with diabetes and chronic liver disease having the strongest relationship. The Alzheimer's disease death rate was associated with census tracts with higher income levels.

> **Those living in poverty may experience food insecurity, inadequate/ unhealthy housing, and poor access to health care. They are also at higher risk of experiencing -**
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> | | |
> |---|---|
> | ◊ **Disability** | ◊ **Chronic lung disease** |
> | ◊ **Poor general health** | ◊ **Asthma** |
> | ◊ **Poor mental health** | ◊ **Obesity** |
> | ◊ **Cardiovascular disease** | ◊ **Binge drinking** |
> | ◊ **Diabetes** | ◊ **Cigarette smoking** |

Act Now

- Be aware of the relationship between poverty and chronic liver disease, diabetes, pneumonia, influenza, and unintentional injuries.

- Collect data on diseases & disease outcomes based on poverty and other socioeconomic characteristics.

- Partner with community groups, policy makers, counties, and tribal authorities to implement prevention strategies in areas with high poverty.

- Focus interventions towards populations with the greatest risk of death.

- Identify & promote resources for assisting those living in poverty.