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Coverage
England and Wales

Theme
Health and Care



Conception rate increases among under 18s

The conception rate among women aged under 18 in England and Wales has risen for the first time since 2002.

Provisional figures published today in the Office for National Statistics' journal *Health Statistics Quarterly* show that the under-18 conception rate increased from 40.9 conceptions per 1,000 women aged 15-17 in 2006 to 41.9 in 2007. The estimated number of conceptions to women aged under 18 in 2007 was 42,918 and these represented 4.8 per cent of all conceptions in England and Wales.

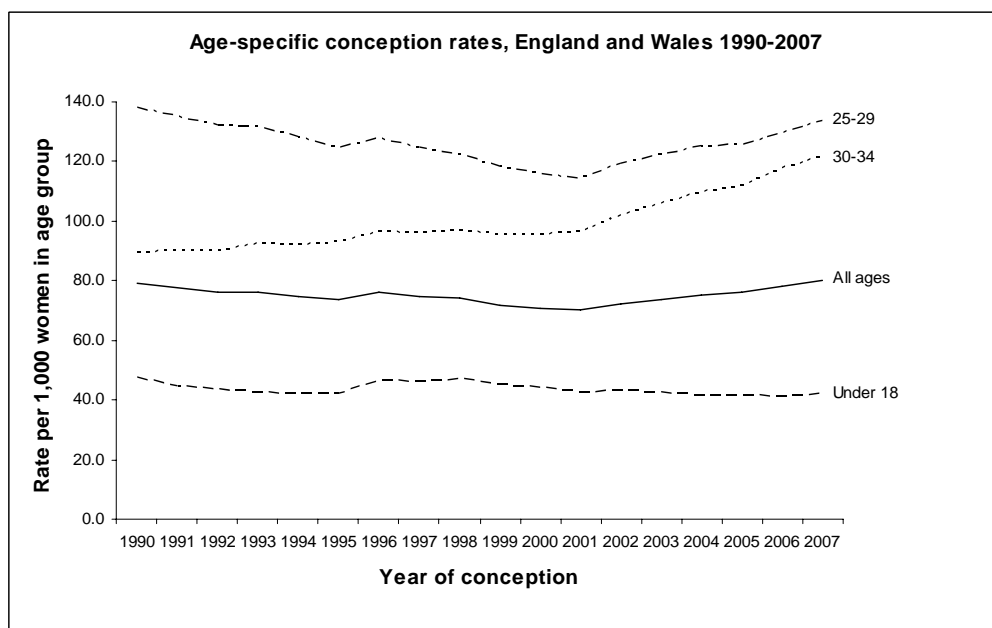
The under-16 conception rate increased from 7.8 per 1,000 girls aged 13-15 in 2006 to 8.3 in 2007. There were an estimated 8,196 conceptions to girls aged under 16 in 2007, representing just under 1 per cent of all conceptions.

Overall, there were an estimated 894,100 conceptions to women of all ages in England and Wales in 2007, compared with 870,000 in 2006, an increase of 2.8 per cent. Conception rates rose in women of all ages, with the overall rate increasing from 78.3 to 80.3 conceptions per 1,000 women aged 15-44.

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Women at all ages over 30 years have seen sustained increases in conception rates since 2000. The largest percentage increase in conceptions to women aged over 18 was in the 30-34 year old age group, where the rate rose from 117.5 conceptions per 1,000 women aged 30-34 in 2006 to 121.7 in 2007. Conceptions to 30-34 year olds made up 23.6 per cent of all conceptions in 2007, the second largest proportion by age group.

In 2007, the conception rate remained highest for women aged 25-29, at 133.4 per 1,000 women in the age group. This age group also had the highest number of conceptions with 234,200 in 2007, making up 26.2 per cent of all conceptions.

As in 2006, 22 per cent of all conceptions in 2007 led to a legal abortion. For women aged under 18, this figure was 50 per cent compared with 48 per cent in 2006.

More information on conceptions is available free on the ONS website:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/product.asp?vlnk=15055>

The report on conceptions is published today in *Health Statistics Quarterly* 41 spring 2009 (p66):

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=6725>

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Figures for 2007 are provisional. Final 2007 conception figures will be published in the annual reference volume, *Conception statistics 2007*, in Autumn 2009.
2. Conception statistics include pregnancies that result in either one or more live births or stillbirths (a maternity) or a legal abortion under the Abortion Act 1967 (an abortion). They do not include miscarriages or illegal abortions.
3. Conception rates are based on mid-year population estimates for the data year in question. Rates for 2002 to 2005 have been based on the latest revised mid-year population estimates that take into account improved estimates of international migration.

4. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the media office.
5. **National Statistics** are produced to high professional standards set out in the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. © Crown copyright 2009.