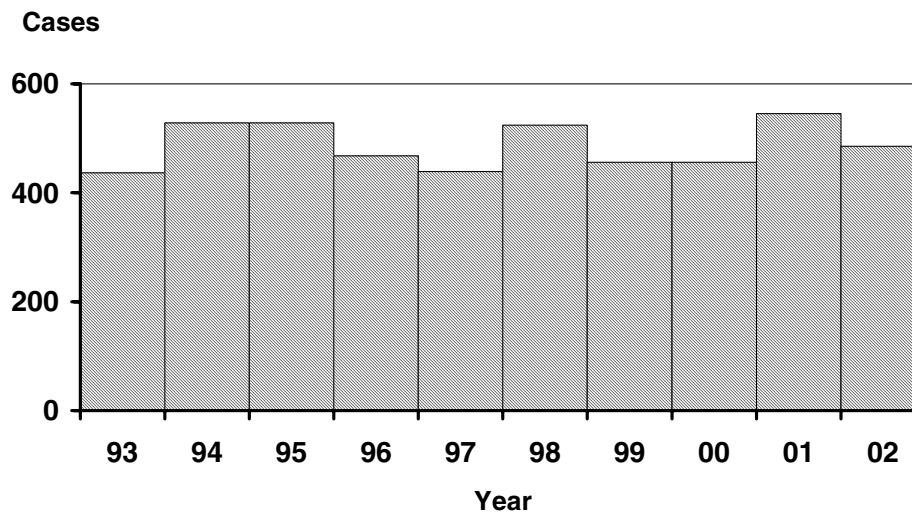


Chronic Hepatitis B

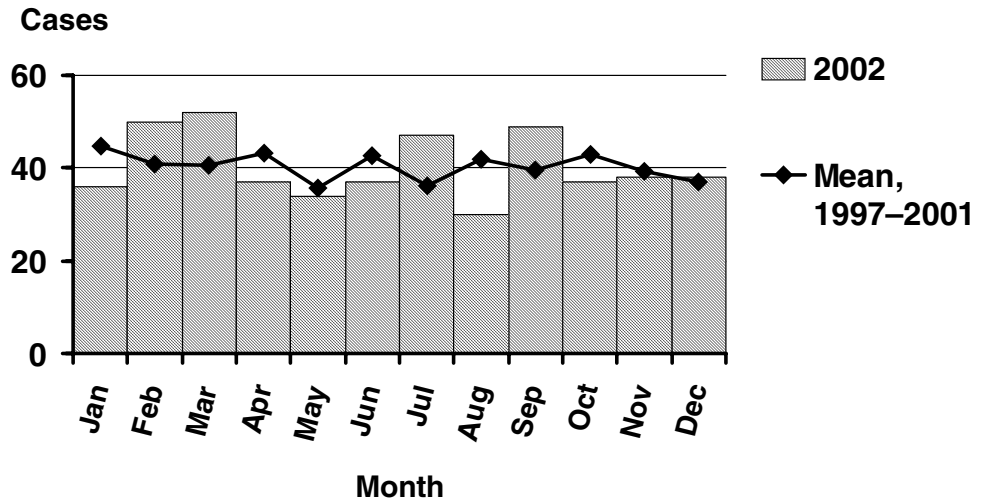
Persons with chronic hepatitis B are known as “chronic carriers” — a state of infection which exists when hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) persists in the blood for more than six months. The likelihood of becoming a chronic carrier is affected by the age at infection. Fewer than 6% of acutely infected adults in the US become carriers, compared to some 25% (with HBeAg-negative moms) to 90% (with HBeAg-positive moms) of children infected in early childhood or during birth. Perinatal infection can be prevented by prompt administration of hepatitis B immune globulin and initiation of the three-dose hepatitis B vaccination series. This perinatal intervention is widely practiced in the US — all states have federal funding for perinatal hepatitis B prevention programs — but not in other parts of the world, particularly Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where the prevalence of chronic hepatitis B is higher to begin with. In Oregon, 50% of chronic carriers were born in hepatitis-B-endemic countries. Chronic carriers are at greater risk of developing life-threatening diseases (e.g., chronic active hepatitis, cirrhosis, and/or liver cancer) decades later. Carriers will sustain transmission of hepatitis B in the US until vaccine-induced immunity is nearly universal.

The number of chronic carriers reported each year in Oregon is four times the number of acute cases. Keep in mind that these are newly-reported carriers, not people who have newly become carriers. Newly-reported carriers are older than acute cases. Chronic carriers are not reportable in many of the US states, so a table comparing Oregon to the rest of the US is not given.

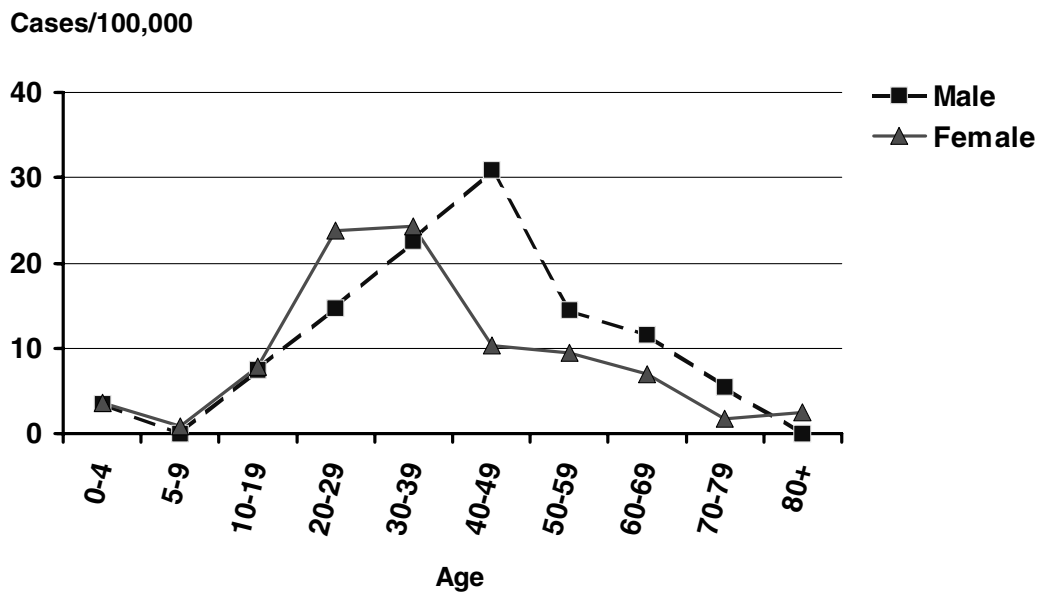
Hepatitis B (Chronic) by Year Oregon, 1993–2002



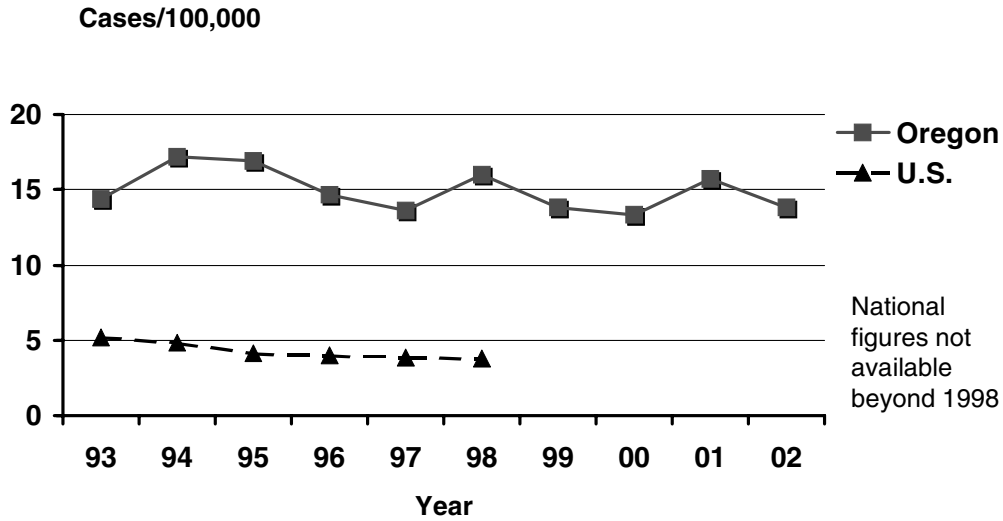
Hepatitis B (Chronic) by Onset Month Oregon, 2002



Incidence of Hepatitis B (Chronic) by Age and Sex Oregon, 2002



Incidence of Hepatitis B (Chronic) Oregon vs. Nationwide 1993–2002



Incidence of Hepatitis B (Chronic) by County Oregon, 2002

