

Causes of Maternal Deaths.—Table 19 shows the main causes of maternal deaths during the years 1959-61. Until a decade or so ago, sepsis and toxæmia were by far the most important causes of death of mothers at childbirth. The danger of death from sepsis and other infection has been sharply reduced over the past 15 to 20 years through the use of antibiotics and probably also through increased use of medical services. On the other hand, the number of deaths caused by toxæmia arising during pregnancy and other complications of both pregnancy and delivery represent continuing problems. Hæmorrhage during pregnancy or delivery, which has been another important cause of mortality among mothers, has shown some reduction in recent years.

Of the 219 maternal deaths in 1961, 53 resulted from complication arising during pregnancy, more than half of these from some type of toxæmia; 96 resulted from a complication of delivery, 44 from a post-delivery complication and 26 from abortive delivery.

19.—Maternal Mortality and Rates per 100,000 Live Births, by Cause, 1959-61

Inter- national List No.	Cause of Death	Numbers of Deaths			Rates per 100,000 Live Births		
		1959	1960	1961	1959	1960	1961
	Complications of Pregnancy.....	82	69	53	17	14	11
640, 641	Infections of the genito-urinary tract during pregnancy.....	2	1	1	--	--	--
642	Toxæmias of pregnancy.....	42	36	29	9	8	6
643	Placenta prævia noted before delivery.....	1	3	—	--	1	—
644	Other hæmorrhage of pregnancy.....	4	3	3	1	1	1
645	Ectopic pregnancy.....	9	7	5	2	1	1
646-649	Other complications of pregnancy.....	24	19	15	5	4	3
	Abortion.....	41	24	26	9	5	5
650, 652	Abortion without mention of sepsis.....	17	6	10	4	1	2
651	Abortion with sepsis.....	24	18	16	5	4	3
	Complications of Delivery.....	95	83	96	20	17	20
660	Delivery (without complication).....	1	1	—	--	--	—
670	Delivery complicated by placenta prævia or antepartum hæmorrhage.....	25	14	18	5	3	4
671	Delivery complicated by retained placenta...	6	4	3	1	1	1
672	Delivery complicated by other postpartum hæmorrhage.....	24	20	20	5	4	4
673, 674	Delivery complicated by abnormality of bony pelvis or malposition of foetus.....	7	5	8	1	1	2
675	Delivery complicated by prolonged labour of other origin.....	6	6	3	1	1	1
676, 677	Delivery with laceration or other trauma.....	14	18	27	3	4	6
678	Delivery with other complications of childbirth.....	12	15	17	3	3	4
	Complications of the Puerperium.....	45	39	44	9	8	9
680	Puerperal urinary infection without other sepsis.....	—	—	—	—	—	—
681	Sepsis of childbirth and the puerperium.....	11	8	13	2	2	3
682-684	Puerperal phlebitis, thrombosis, pyrexia, pulmonary embolism.....	19	15	13	4	3	3
685, 686	Puerperal eclampsia and toxæmia.....	5	5	3	1	1	1
687-689	Other.....	10	11	15	2	2	3
	Totals, All Puerperal Causes.....	263	215	219	55	45	46

Section 4.—Natural Increase*

The excess of births over deaths, commonly referred to as natural increase, is a very important factor in the growth of a population. Although, as previously stated, the collection of Canadian birth and death statistics began only in 1921, some idea of the rate of

* For international comparisons, see Section 7, pp. 256-257.