

Deaths due to assault among First Nations women in Alberta

Age-standardized rates of death due to assault among women by First Nations status, Alberta, 2000-2015

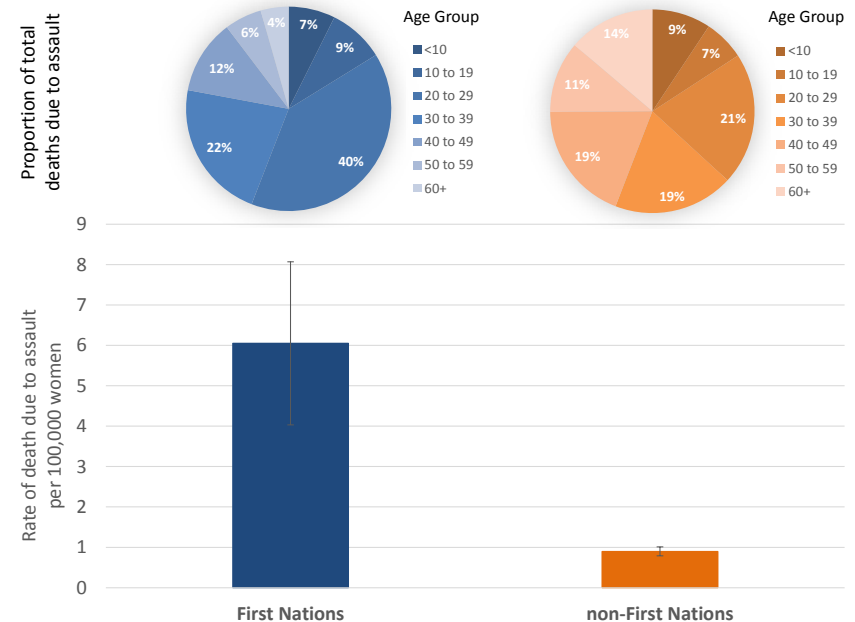
Globally, violence against women is an important public health and human rights issue.¹ In Canada, Indigenous women are disproportionately at risk.² In today's *First Nations – Health Trends Alberta*,³ we present age-standardized rates of death due to assault for First Nations and non-First Nations women in Alberta for 2000 to 2015.

Among women, rates of death due to assault are almost 7 times higher for First Nations compared to non-First Nations.

In Alberta between 2000 and 2015, there was an annual average of around 9,520 total deaths among women in Alberta (300 First Nations and 9,220 non-First Nations). Around 0.2 per cent of these deaths were due to assault: there were 68 total homicide deaths over the 16 year period among First Nations and 247 among non-First Nations women.

Over this time period, the age-standardized 'all cause' mortality rate was double for First Nations women compared to non-First Nations women (1177.7 versus 618.9 per 100,000 population, respectively). However, an even greater disparity existed between First Nations and non-First Nations women who died by homicide: the age-standardized rate of death due to assault was 6.1 per 100,000 First Nations women compared to 0.9 per 100,000 non-First Nations women (6.8 times higher).

The largest proportion of these deaths among First Nations women occurred between the ages of 20 and 29 (40 per cent of total homicide deaths among First Nations women), followed by those aged 30 to 39 (22 per cent of total). In contrast, among non-First Nations women, the age groups most impacted by homicide deaths were spread evenly across those aged of 20 to 29, 30 to 39, and 40 to 49 with each age group accounting for around 20 per cent of total homicide deaths. Annual fluctuations due to a proportionally small number of deaths make time trends difficult to assess. However, homicide rates for both populations appear to have remained relatively stable over time.



1 World Health Organization. Violence against women. (<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/>).

2 RCMP. Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: A National Operational Overview (<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/wam/media/460/original/0cbd8968a049aa0b44d343e76b4a9478.pdf>).

3 This is the 17th in a series of First Nations-specific Health Trends compiled in collaboration by Alberta Health and the Alberta First Nations Information Governance Centre (AFNIGC). To suggest future topics, please contact the AFNIGC (communications@afnigc.ca; 403-539-5775).