

# Birth Weight

## Why Is This Important?

Birth weight is an important indicator of general infant health and prenatal nutrition. Low birth weight (less than 2,500 grams) is a strong predictor of infant mortality with low birth weight babies 20 times more likely to die than other heavier weight babies. Low birth weight is associated with a number of factors including preterm birth, maternal smoking, alcohol or substance use, stress, racial discrimination, as well as past history of low birth weight.

Risks for high birth weight (greater than 4,500 grams) include gestational diabetes and maternal overweight or obesity. High birth weight infants are at higher risk for prolonged labour, birth trauma and caesarean delivery, as well as obesity and diabetes later in life.

## What Is Being Done?

[Children's Hospital of Saskatchewan](#)

[Healthy Mother Healthy Baby](#)

[Prenatal Education](#) program in Saskatoon Health Region

## To Learn More:

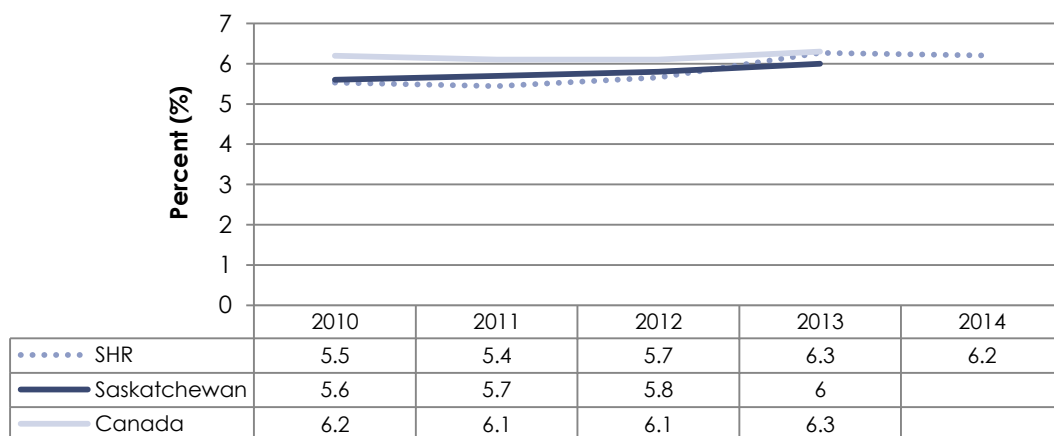
Chief Medical Health Officer's [Call to Action](#)

## Highlights

### Low birth weight percentages are increasing in the Region.

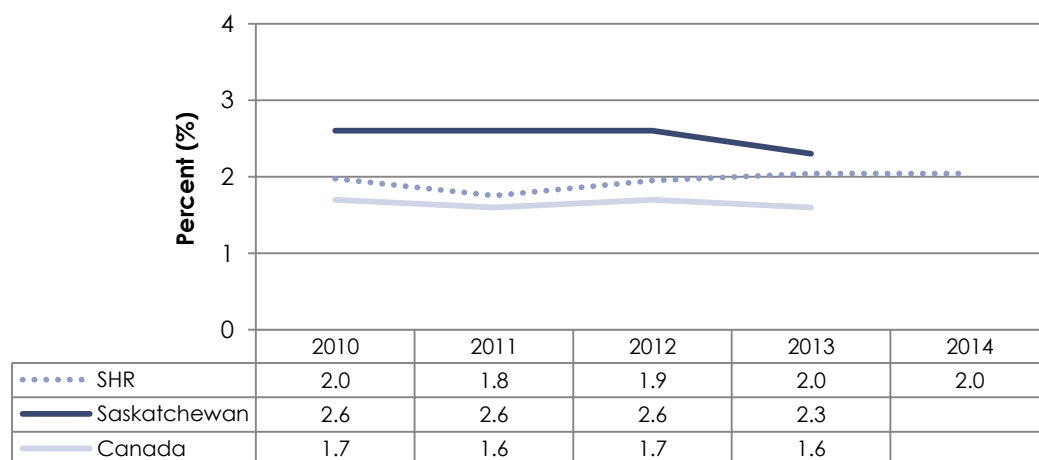
- Low birth weight has been increasing steadily in Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatchewan and Canada (Figure 1). In 2014, the low birth weight percent for the Region was 6.2% (291 infants), an increase from 5.5% in 2010.
- High birth weight has been relatively stable across the Region, in Saskatchewan and Canada over time (Figure 2). About 2% of births in the Region (96 births), were over 4,500 grams.
- Further low birth weight information along with high birth weight is shown [here](#).

**Figure 1: Low Birth Weight, Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatchewan, Canada, 2010 to 2014**



Source: Statistics Canada (SK and Canada); Vital Statistics, eHealth Saskatchewan

**Figure 2: High Birth Weight, Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatchewan, Canada, 2010 to 2014**



Source: Vital Statistics, eHealth Saskatchewan