

25. Regional Disparities in Access to Prenatal Care in Brazil: A Cross-Sectional Study Using Public Health Data

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BACKGROUND: Access to adequate prenatal care is essential for improving maternal and neonatal outcomes. In Brazil, substantial progress has been observed; however, regional disparities persist despite universal health coverage. **METHODS:** A cross-sectional study was conducted using publicly available data from DATASUS (2022–2024). The number of prenatal consultations was analyzed across geographic regions. Adequate prenatal care was defined as seven or more consultations. Chi-square test was applied. **RESULTS:** A total of 7,347,562 live births were analyzed. Overall, 78.4% of women had seven or more prenatal visits. The North region had the lowest proportion (~64%), while the South (~85%) and Southeast (~82%) had the highest. Differences were statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 161,184$; $p < 0.001$). **CONCLUSION:** Despite universal health coverage, significant regional inequalities persist in Brazil, highlighting the need for targeted public health strategies.

Table 1. Distribution of Prenatal Visits by Region (2022–2024) - DATASUS

Region	1–3 visits	4–6 visits	7+ visits	Total
North	78524	211110	518434	808068
Northeast	97389	382520	1547250	2027159
Southeast	99011	410771	2302682	2812464
South	29872	125913	886920	1042705
Center-West	32509	116347	508310	657166

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