

## Study of Birth Defects in Basra Governorate Between the Years 2019-2023

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**Abstract:** The study is a historical one, examining the fact of birth defects during a five-year period, from August 2023 to January 2024, in Basra Governorate. Data for the study were obtained from the Department of Vital Statistics and from the Center for Genetic Blood Diseases within the Health Directorate of Basra from November to December 2023.

The study presents a table showing the total number of births in the governorate, live births, cases of birth defects, and incidence of birth defects per 1,000 live births. Another table showed rates and numbers in terms of the top ten etiologies of birth defects, hereditary blood diseases, and other contributing factors.

The findings were analyzed by descriptive statistical means, i.e., frequency, percentage, and rate per thousand. The study revealed that the total numbers of births in the governorate were 63,202, 63,091, 60,601, 59,731, and 60,739 within the five-year period ranging from 2019 to 2023. The total number of birth-defect events reported during those years amounts to 195, 262, 231, 331, and 241, thus totaling 1,242 cases of birth defects in five years. The study found that there was a significant increase per annum in births affected by birth defects. It is therefore recommended that the public should be educated on the causes of birth defects and prevention strategies, whereby the health authorities should proceed to establish educational strategies.

**Key points:** Congenital malformations, Basra Governorate, Vital Statistics, Genetic Blood Diseases, Descriptive statistics.

### 1. Introduction:

Throughout their course, people from all continents have shown an abiding interest in all anomalies. Unusual births, and the presence of unique individuals, intrigued primitive societies even more than the birth of regular children, and various detailing records to such occurrences have been preserved. Even before the advent of language, different methods were employed to preserve tales of remarkable abnormalities.

One particular anomaly has always interested societies throughout history-the existence of dwarfs. The interest dates back some 5,000 years when Egyptian depictions and sculptures constituted the representation of these "little people." However, it would be almost 3,000 years more before scientific records of the phenomenon could emerge and be recognized.

The fascination for anomalies and recording of such episodes display the natural curiosity and need among human societies to be able to understand and explain the diversity in the world that surrounds them. These historical records portray the continued intrigue for unique ones throughout