

Social Security Advisory Board Panels

The Future of Mortality, Disability, and Work: Helping to Inform the Social Security Trust Fund Projections

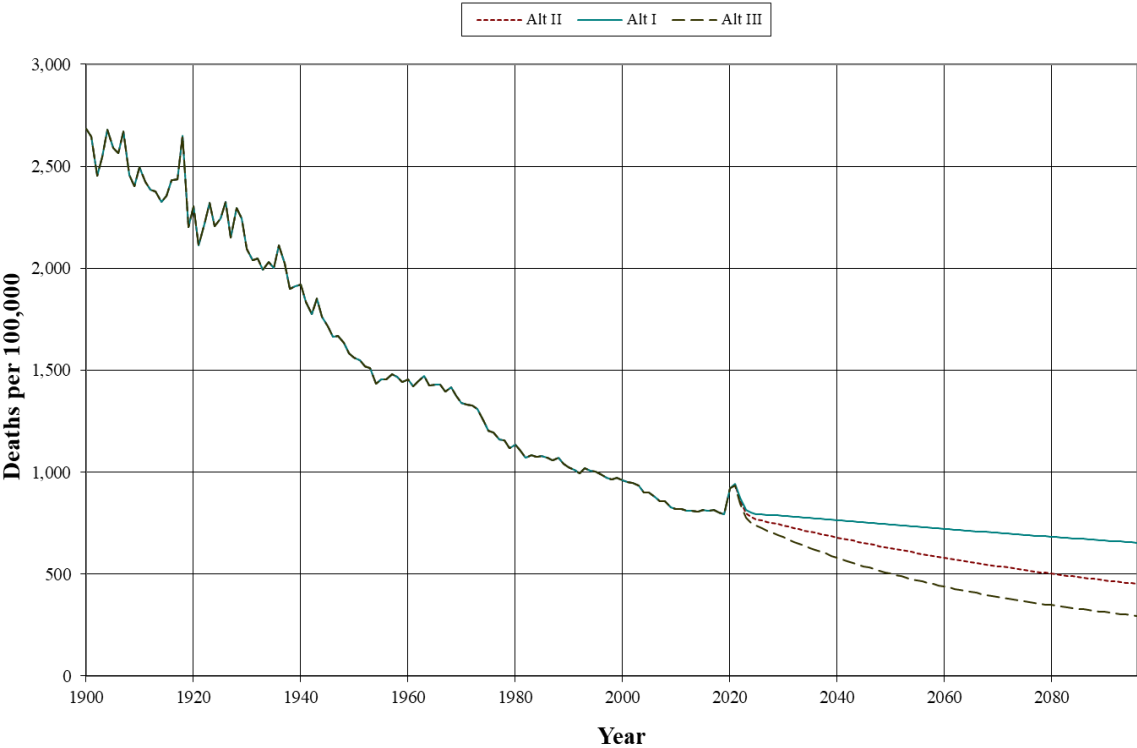
Office of the Chief Actuary
Social Security Administration

August 25, 2023

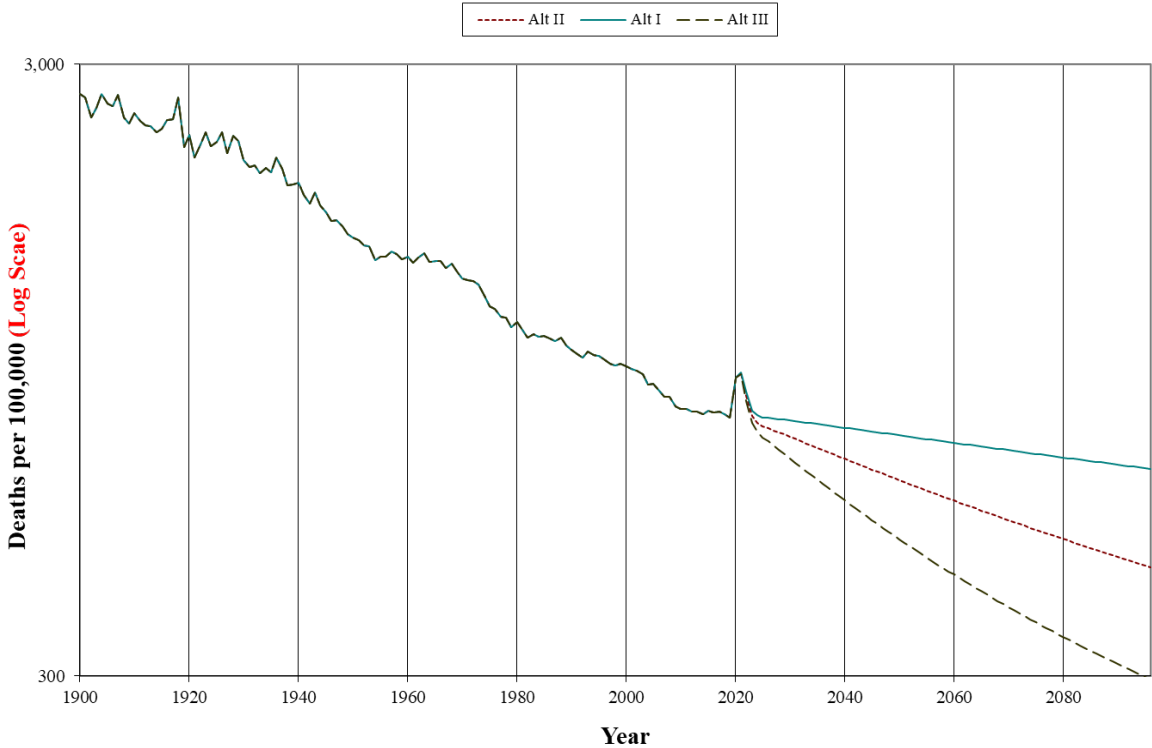
The Future of Mortality

Remarkable Reduction in Mortality in Latter Half of the 20th Century: Antibiotics After WWII and Later Cardiovascular

Total Age-Sex-Adjusted Death Rates for the 2023 TR



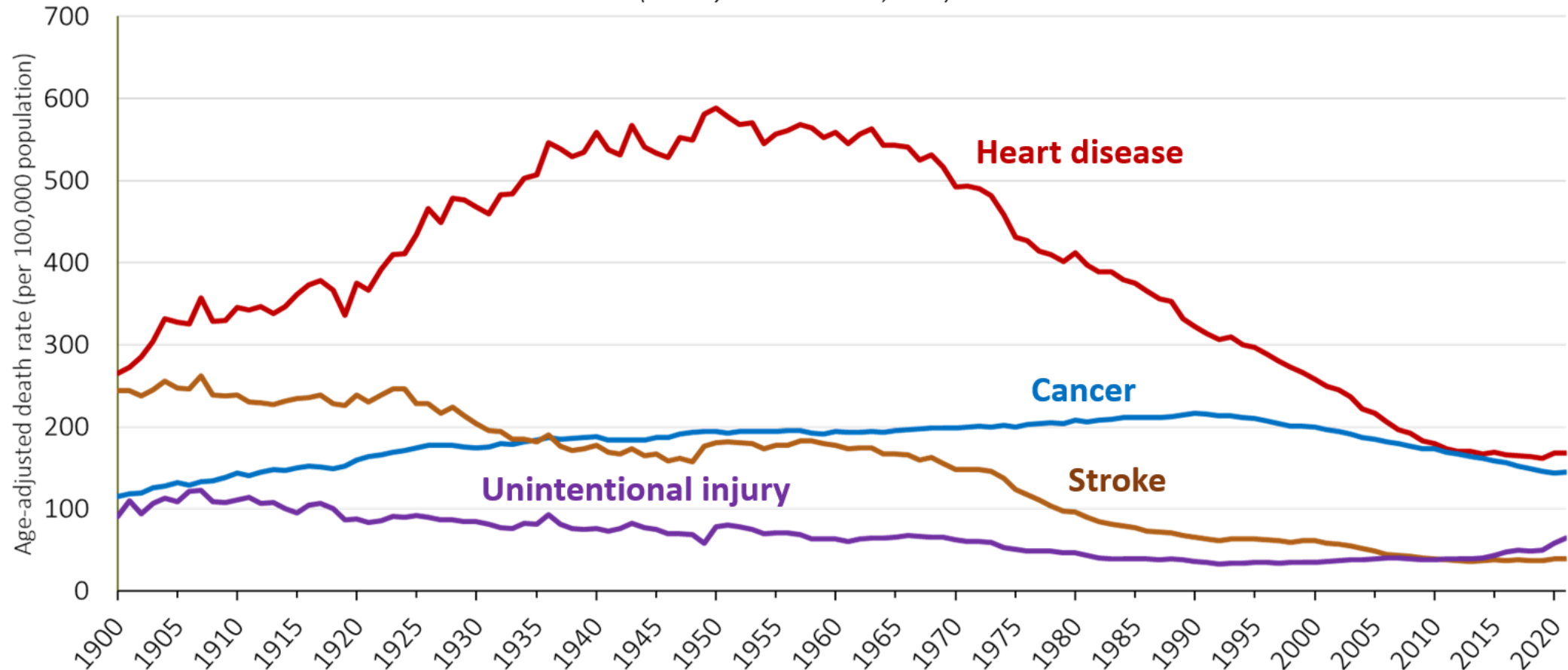
Total Age-Sex-Adjusted Death Rates for the 2023 TR



But Declines Have Been Slowing, With Remaining Causes Harder to Address: Cancer, Violence, Dementia

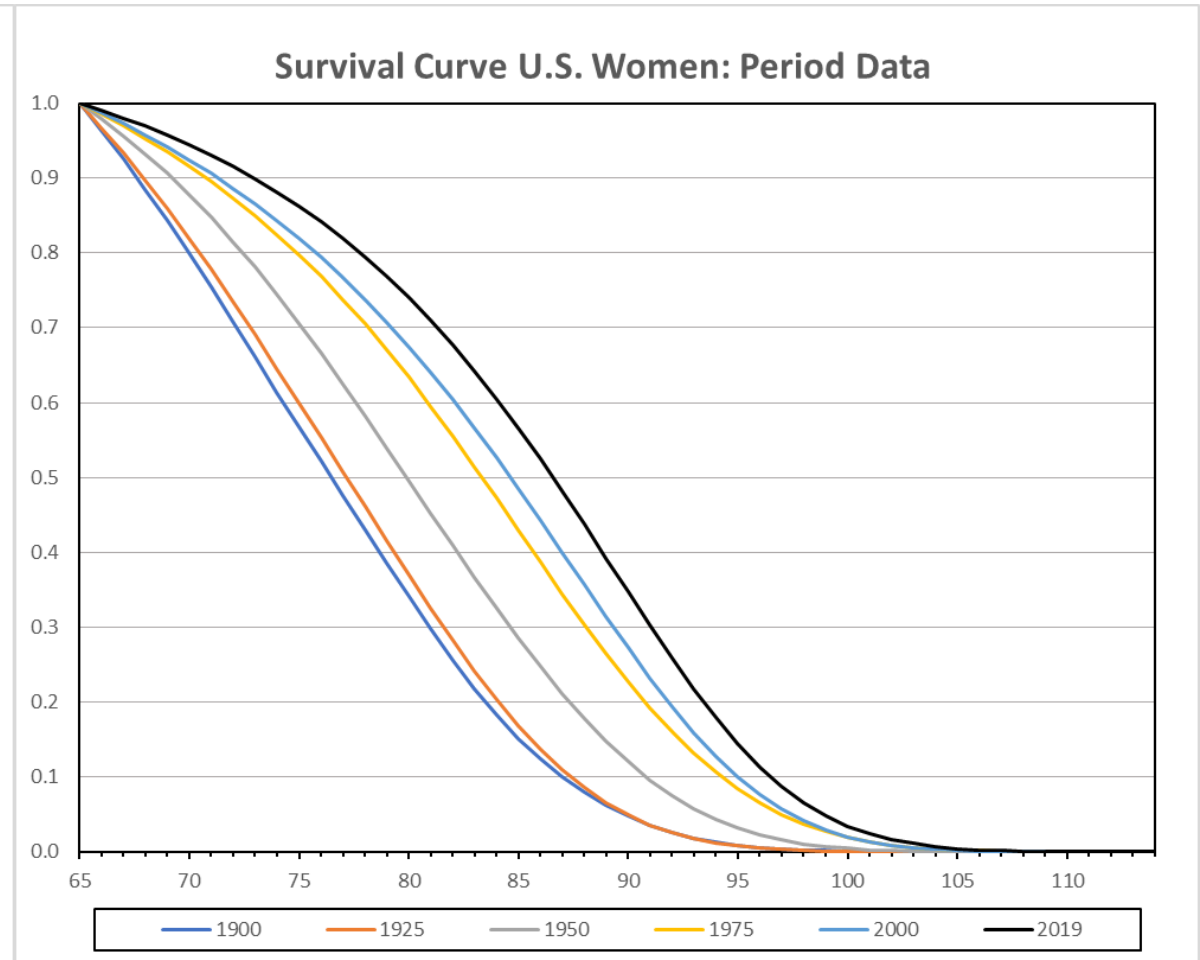
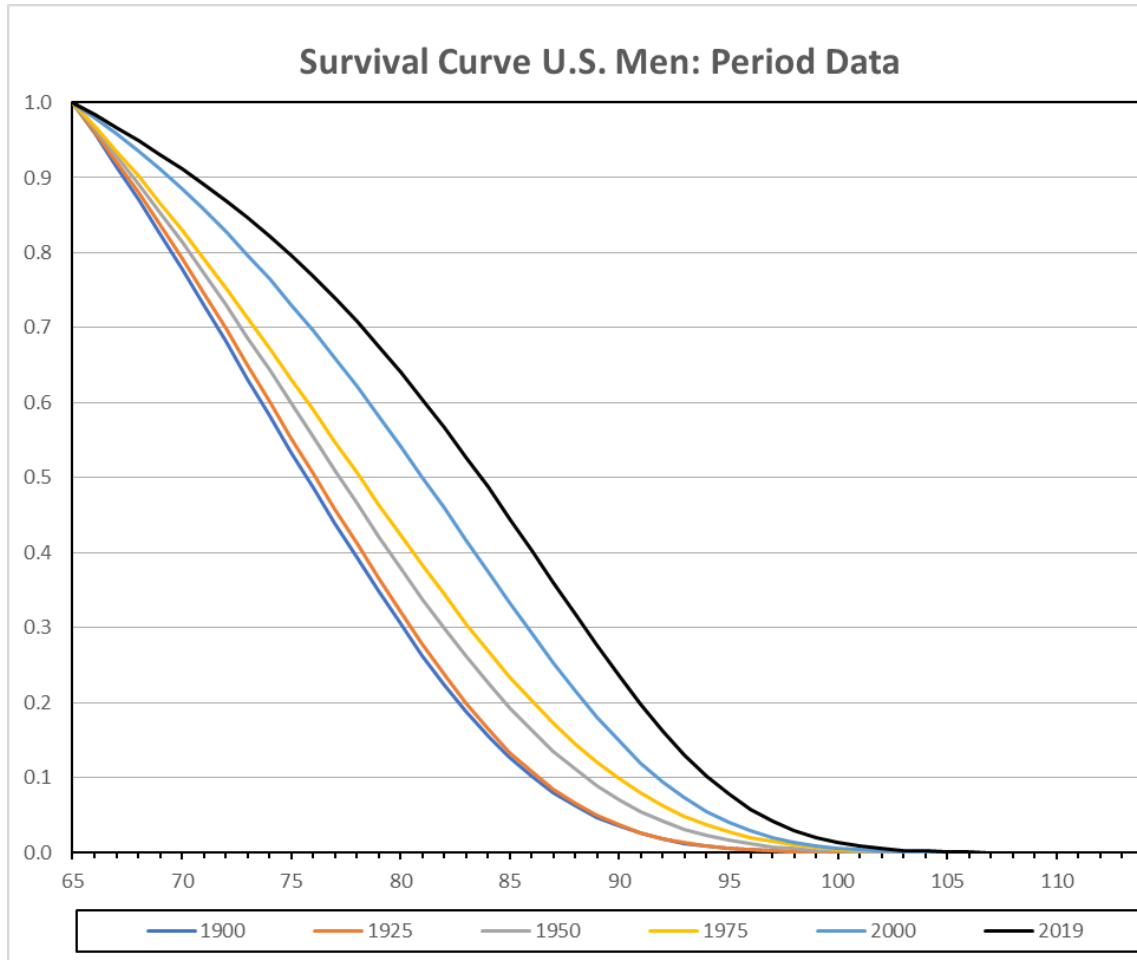
Age-Adjusted Death Rates for Heart Disease, Cancer, Stroke, and Unintentional Injuries: United States, 1900-2021

(courtesy Robert Anderson, NCHS)



Notes: Data are from the National Vital Statistics System. Prior to 1933, data are for death-registration States only. Data for 2021 are provisional.

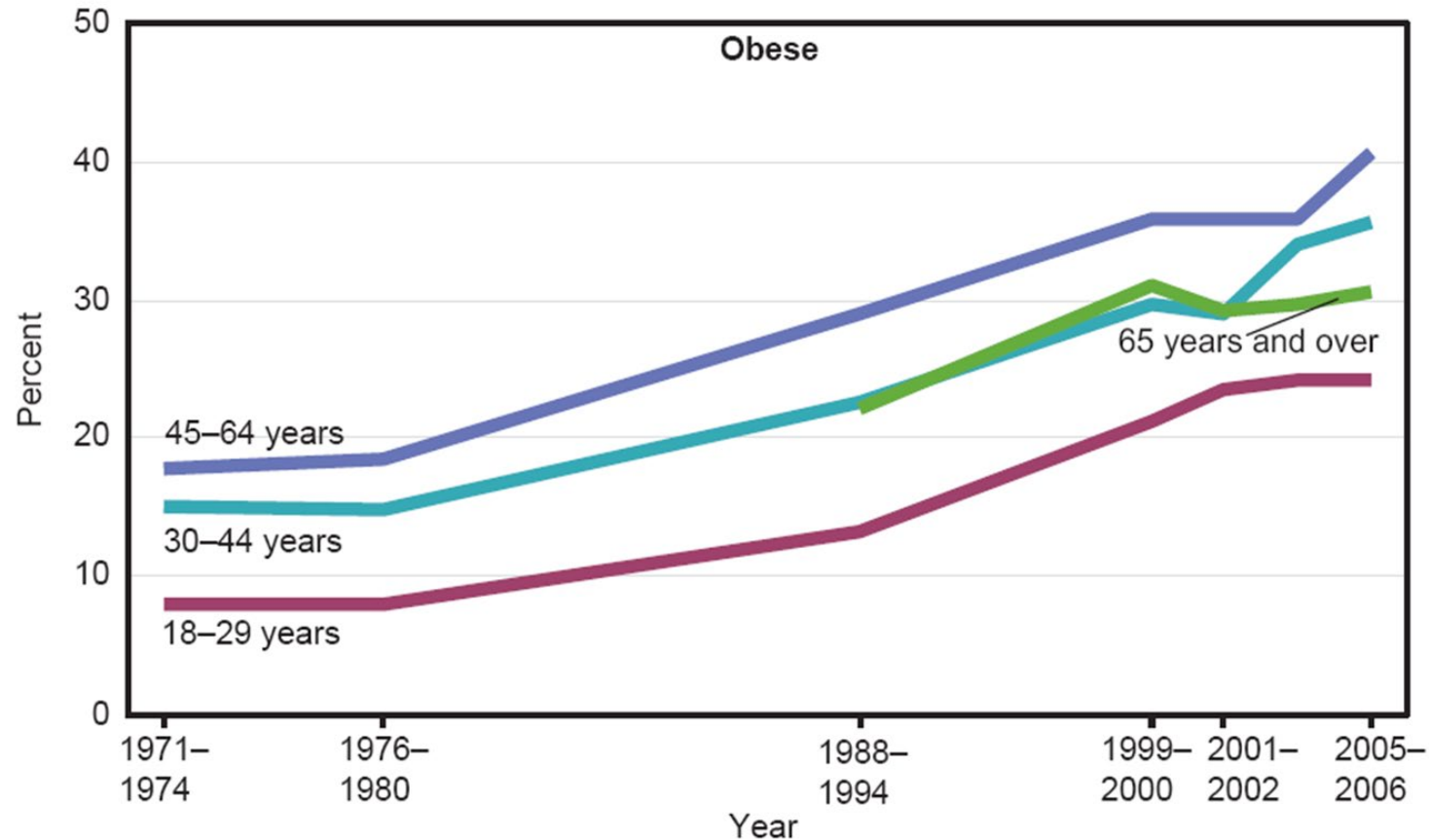
We Have Been “Rectangularizing” the Survival Curve, With Little Evidence of Advancing Maximum Lifespan



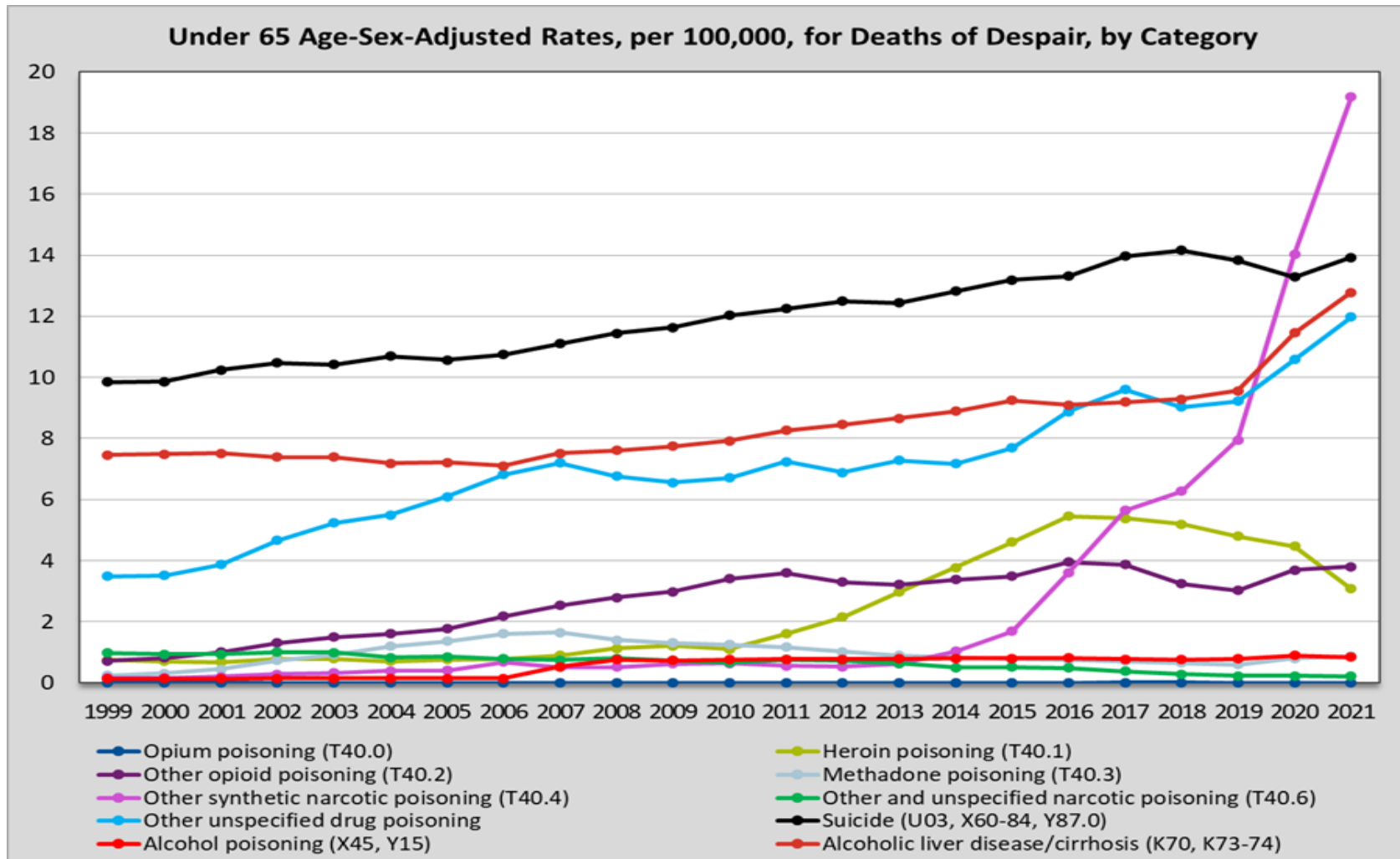
Obesity, Drug Abuse, and Even Climate Effects Seem Likely to Diminish Prospects for Mortality Improvement

Trends in Obesity: US 1971-2006

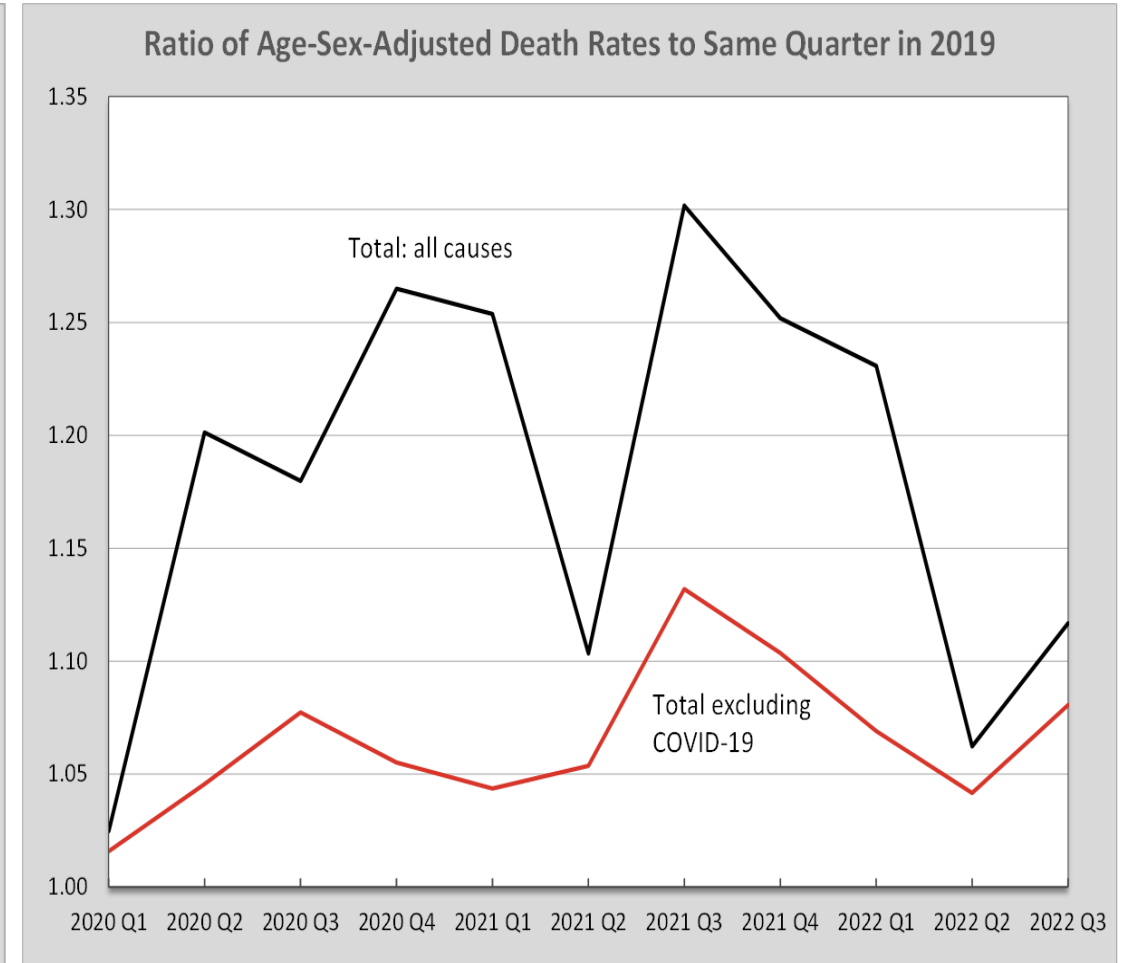
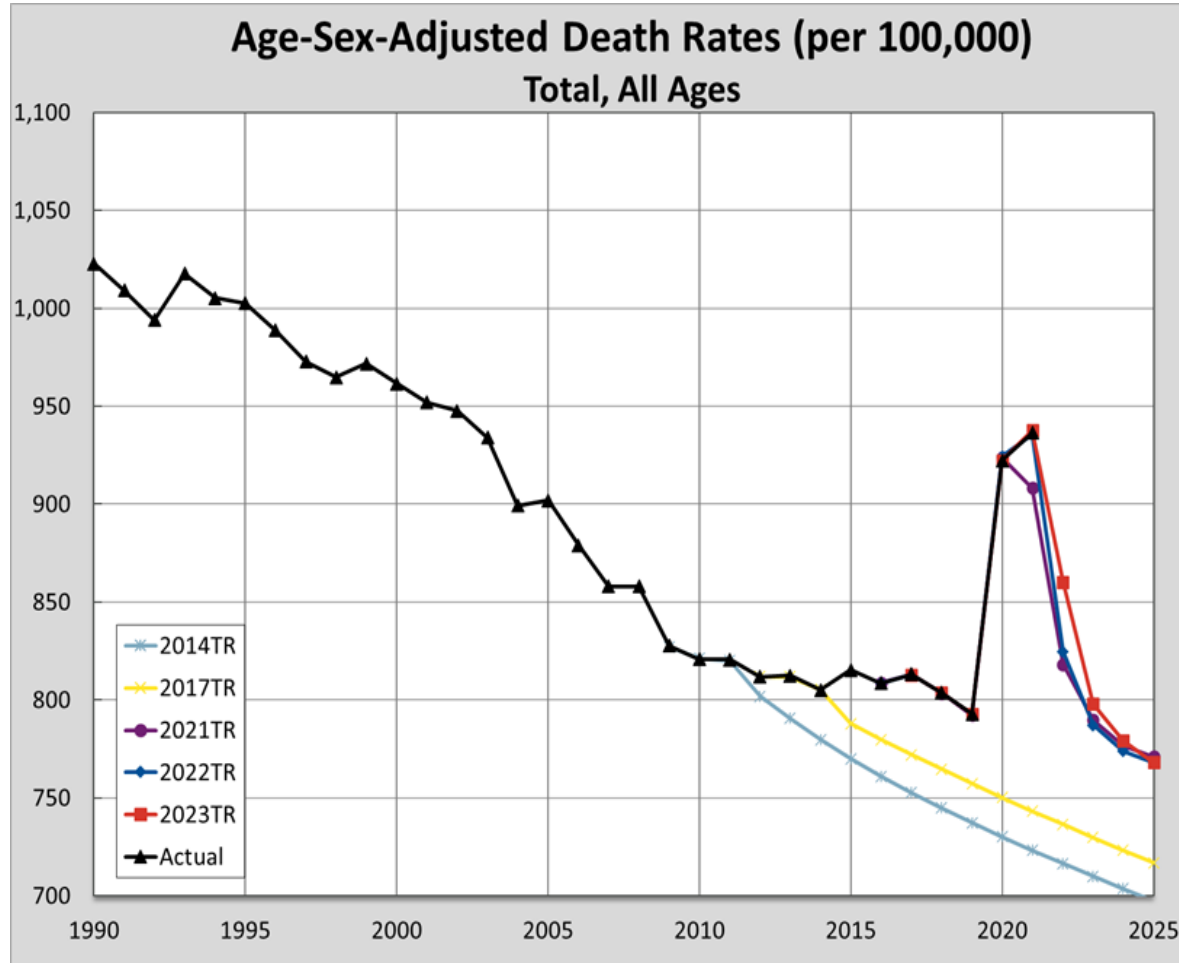
Must consider **cumulative** effects; increasing duration of obesity for aged in future (*courtesy Sam Preston, 2010*)



Obesity, Drug Abuse, and Even Climate Effects Seem Likely to Diminish Prospects for Mortality Improvement



COVID-19 a Major Distortion—Frequency of Future Pandemics in the “Shrinking World”?



Many Questions About the Future of Mortality...

- Can we expect major breakthroughs in cancer and dementia, and a reduction in violence?
- What will the effects be of COVID, post-COVID conditions, and other future pandemics?
- What do we expect for obesity and “deaths of despair” in the future?
- Health spending cannot continue to rise at historical rates (and has slowed down recently); what are long-term effects of deceleration?
- Effects of an aging population and climate change, straining resources?