

Injury Prevention

The importance of this category of indicators is to determine underlying causes of injuries in a community that impact the health and well being of its citizens. However, the only measures for injury incidence are hospitalization and death rates. Hospitalizations include only inpatients; those patients treated in the emergency department and then released are not included. And there is no way to determine the number or type of injuries that occur in people who do not seek treatment at the hospital or at their physician's office.

Data Analysis

Population (2001)

• NYSDOH	x 1,000
Tompkins	98.0
Cayuga	81.4
Cortland	48.6
Tioga	51.5
CNY	1,427.1
Upstate	8,239.7
NYS	19,084.4

An important point to remember when reviewing statistical rates such as the mortality rates discussed below, is that the raw numbers in play are often very low. In these cases one or two incidents can cause a wide swing in the rate per population constant. As the jurisdictional population increases — town—county—region—state — the effect becomes less pronounced. Still, even in Tompkins County with a population of nearly 100,000, one exceptional incident can translate as a major change in accidental injury mortality rates.

Suicide deaths

• Age-adj. rates per	
100,000 pop, 2000–2002.	
Tompkins	12.0
Cayuga	4.8
Cortland	6.6
Tioga	6.1
CNY	9.1
NYS	6.6

The rate of suicide deaths in Tompkins County is relatively high. When adjusted for age, the rate per 100,000 population is the twelfth highest in the state. The counties with a higher rate are all significantly less populous. (Franklin County's age adjusted suicide rate of 16.2 is based on a population of 51,000.)

While those familiar with the local terrain might speculate that there is a link between the County's famous gorges and the suicide rate, in fact of the 60 suicides from 1998–2003 only 7 were recorded as jumps. Over one-third (22) were gunshot wounds.

Across Upstate New York the crude suicide rate remained flat over the 10 year period, 1993–2002. During the same period Tompkins County ranged from a crude rate of 4.1 in 1995 to 13.3 in 2001. The trend of 3-year averages, calculated to smooth out the extremes, increased by more than 60 percent from 1993–2003. (See Figure 113, page 133, and Figure 114, page 134.)

New York State also provides data for suicide deaths among young adults age 15–19 years. In Tompkins County the suicide rate for this age group is much more consistent with rates across the rest of the region. However, while the 10-year trend for all of Upstate is flat to declining, the 3-year averages for Tompkins County show a significant rise in young adult suicides. (See Figure 115, page 134, and Figure 116, page 135.)

Homicides

• Rates per 100,000 pop, 2000–2002.

Tompkins	3.3
Oneida	3.5
Onondaga.....	4.9
Seneca.....	7.1
Monroe.....	6.8
Broome.....	1.9
Chemung.....	0.8

The homicide rate in Tompkins County is the highest among the regional counties that are the basis of comparisons throughout this document — Cayuga, Cortland, Tioga, and CNY total. A broader view shows that in counties where homicide rates are higher there is often a large city. The standard comparisons are shown in *Figure 121, page 137*, and some additional comparisons are shown at left.

The 1993–2003 trend for homicides in Tompkins County is shown in *Figure 122, page 138*. The rates are so erratic from year-to-year that not even the 3-year averages offers any hints of what has been or what’s to come. Across the whole of Upstate NY the trend was decidedly downward from 1993–1999, but since has taken an upward tick.

Work related injury mortality

The NYSDOH data for this indicator was not available at the time this report was prepared.

SPARCS

The Statewide Planning and Research Cooperative System (SPARCS) collects data on hospital inpatient discharges and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) provides the data as a way of tracking injury incidence. If hospital admission was not required — emergency room treatment and release for example — the event is not recorded in these data sets.

An ICD-9 code is assigned to every case at discharge. The code, which indicates the primary reason for hospitalization, forms the basis of the injury data.

Self-inflicted injuries

ICD code: E950-E959

• Hospitalization rate per 100,000 pop, 2000–2002.

Tompkins	51.7
Cayuga	69.2
Cortland	53.5
Tioga.....	31.7
CNY	60.1
NYS	41.9

An interesting contrast can be found in comparing the suicide rates outlined above with non-fatal, self-inflicted injuries (expressed as hospital discharge rates per 100,000 population.) Because while Tompkins’ suicide rates are high (fatal, self-inflicted injuries) the latter statistics are quite the opposite in some respects.

For example, Cayuga County has one of the very lowest suicide rates in the state, yet among the highest self-inflicted injury rates. On the other hand the rate for Tompkins County is below that of the CNY region. Furthermore, the local rate has shown a marked decline — close to 24 percent — over the 1993–2002 trend period. (*See Figure 117, page 135, and Figure 118, page 136.*)

The pattern of comparisons is similar for self-inflicted injury rates among the age 15–19 population group. (*See Figure 119, page 136, and Figure 120, page 137.*)

Assault incidence

ICD code: E960-E969

The NYSDOH tracks assault victims through hospital discharges. When compared regionally as rates per 100,000 population, Tompkins

County shows a low incidence of assault. And while the local 10-year trend has not fallen as many points as that of Upstate NY, Tompkins' 3-year averages for assault incidence declined 45 percent from 1993–2002. (See *Figure 123 and Figure 124, page 139.*)

Unintentional Injury

Motor vehicle deaths

Motor vehicle death rates in Tompkins County are relatively low by regional comparison. The 10-year trend shows that a decline through the latter half of the 1990's plateaued in the early years of the new decade. The annual rate for all of Upstate has remained relatively flat over the 1993–2002 period. (See *Figure 125 and Figure 126, page 139.*)

Alcohol-related motor vehicles deaths and injuries are shown in *Figure 127, page 140.* The current rate for Tompkins County is as much as 41 percent lower than others in the regional comparison, though it is just above the statewide rate of just under 50 fatal and non-fatal alcohol-related motor vehicle injuries per 100,000 population.

Unintentional injury hospitalizations

ICD Code: E800–E949

• Difference of Tompkins County rate compared to rate for total CNY (2000–2002):

All ages	-30%
Age <10 yr.....	-19%
Age 10–14.....	-45%
Age 15–24.....	-46%
Age 25–64.....	-27%
Age 65+.....	+1%

The NYSDOH reports non-motor vehicle related unintentional injury data in 5 different age groupings: under age 10 years, age 10–14, age 15–24, age 25–64, and age 65 years and over. The data is displayed in *Figure 131, page 142, through Figure 135, page 145.*

In regional comparisons, and across the age groups under age 65 years, Tompkins County typically has a relatively low incidence of hospitalizations due to unintentional injury. And in fact, in most age groups the local rates are considerably below the CNY total. Statewide, Tompkins County has among the lowest rates of unintentional injury in all age categories under age 65 (the lowest statewide for the age 15–24 group.)

This pattern is broken in the age 65+ group where Tompkins is about equal to the CNY total, and the 23rd highest out of New York's 62 counties. (See *Figure 136, page 146.*)

Reading the 3-year averages for Tompkins County in order to smooth out the swings in annual data, local 10-year trends are not consistently up or down across the age groups. In fact, while all under age 65 trend lines for Upstate show declines over the 1993–2002 period, for Tompkins this is only evident for 2 of 4 under age 65 groups. Trends for age <10 years and age 25–64 show increases in unintentional injury hospitalizations during the early years of this decade.

In the case of the age 65+ group, an upward trend is visible in the Upstate data, and a wide increase for Tompkins is seen over the later 1990's. Note that in the case of Tompkins County, the rate of 2,471 hospitalizations per 100,000 persons age 65+ years indicates about one hospitalized due to unintentional injury for every four in the over 65

population. Again, refer to the data displayed in *Figure 131, page 142, through Figure 136, page 146.*

**Osteoporosis
assessment in TC**

The County Office for the Aging reports that there are 11,967 residents in Tompkins County sixty years of age and older. In its “2004 Senior Needs Assessment Survey” COFA reports that 20.10% of survey respondents reported that they had osteoporosis. This percentage would translate into an actual number of 2,040 residents with the condition. Given that falls are the most common injury in seniors, the incidence of osteoporosis may offer some explanation for the injury rate in this population. For more information on the health of seniors in Tompkins County: www.tompkins-co.org/cofa

Traumatic brain injury
ICD-9 codes 800-801.9,
803-804.9, 850-
854.1, 950.1-950.3,
959.01 and 995.55.

Traumatic brain injuries are much less common in Tompkins County than in other of the comparison areas. The local rates remained relatively steady over the trend period, 1993–2002. (*See Figure 129, page 141, and Figure 130, page 142.*)

Community Resources

Child safety seats

The Tompkins County Sheriff’s Department with funds from the Governor’s Council on Traffic Safety provides car and booster seats to children whose families are financially unable to purchase them. And all parents in the County may have the Sheriff’s Department check their children’s car seats for proper installation.

Pedestrian safety

Concern about pedestrian safety in the City of Ithaca has been increasing recently. Mayor Carolyn Peterson has appointed a Pedestrian Awareness Committee to study problems and find solutions to the pedestrian situation in the city.

Figures and Tables

Figure 113 — Suicide deaths, regional comparison

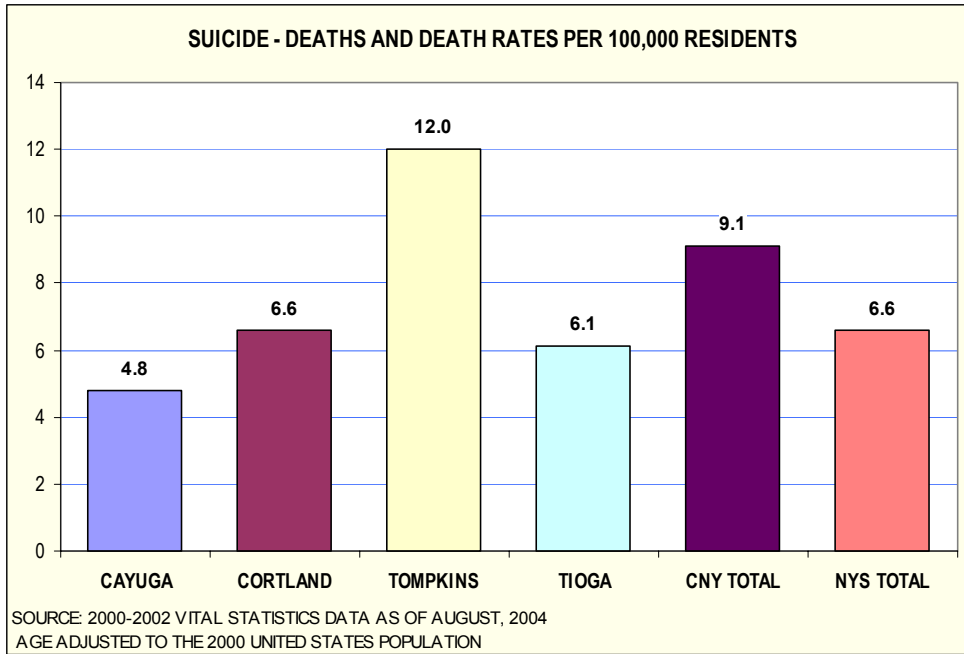


Figure 114 — Suicide deaths, 10-year trend

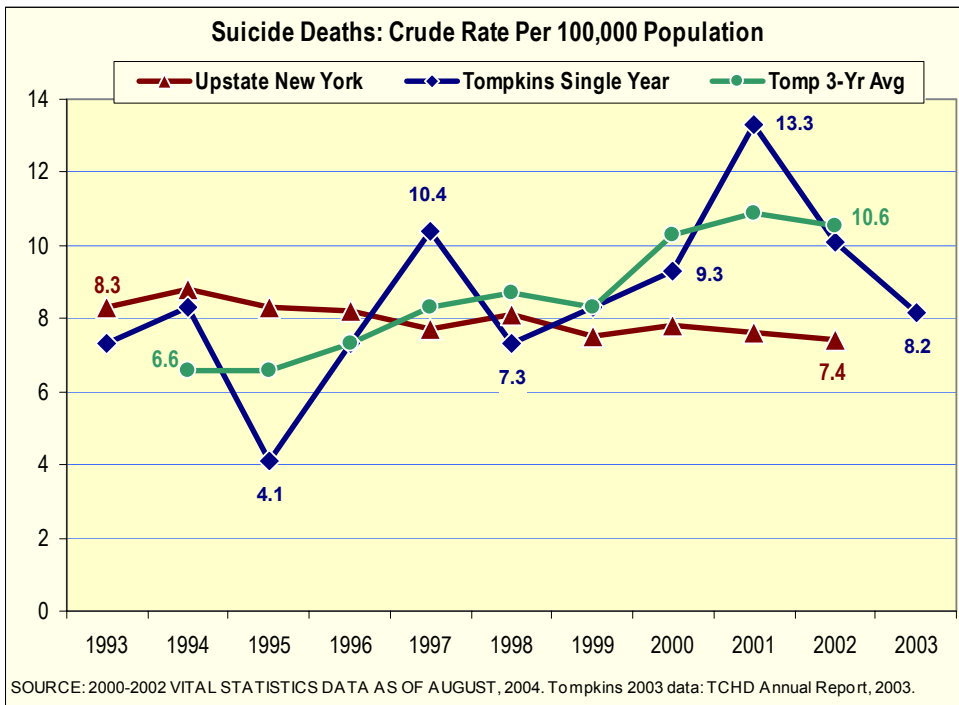


Figure 115 — Suicide deaths, ages 15–19 years, regional comparison

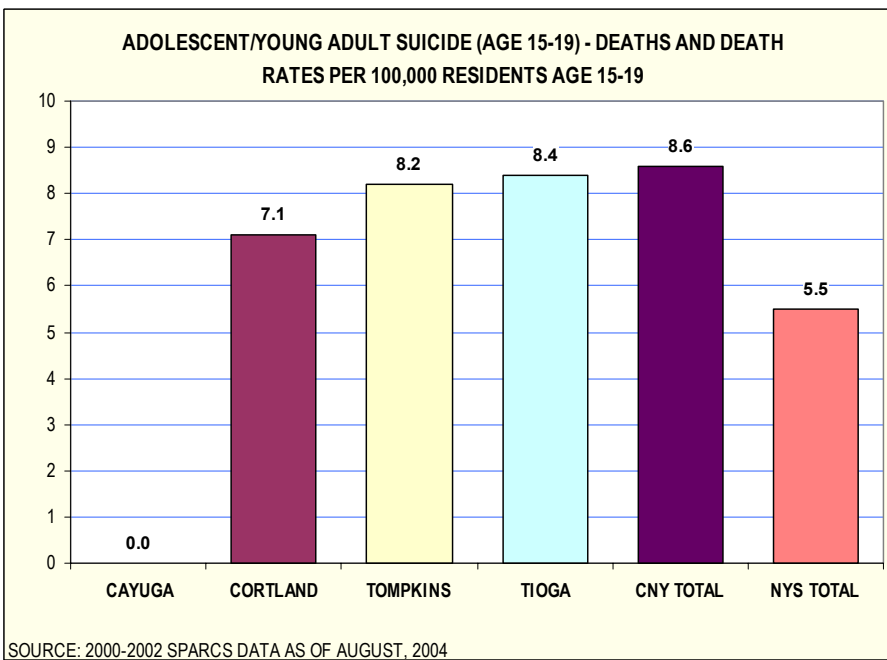


Figure 116 — Suicide deaths, ages 15–19 years, 10-year trend

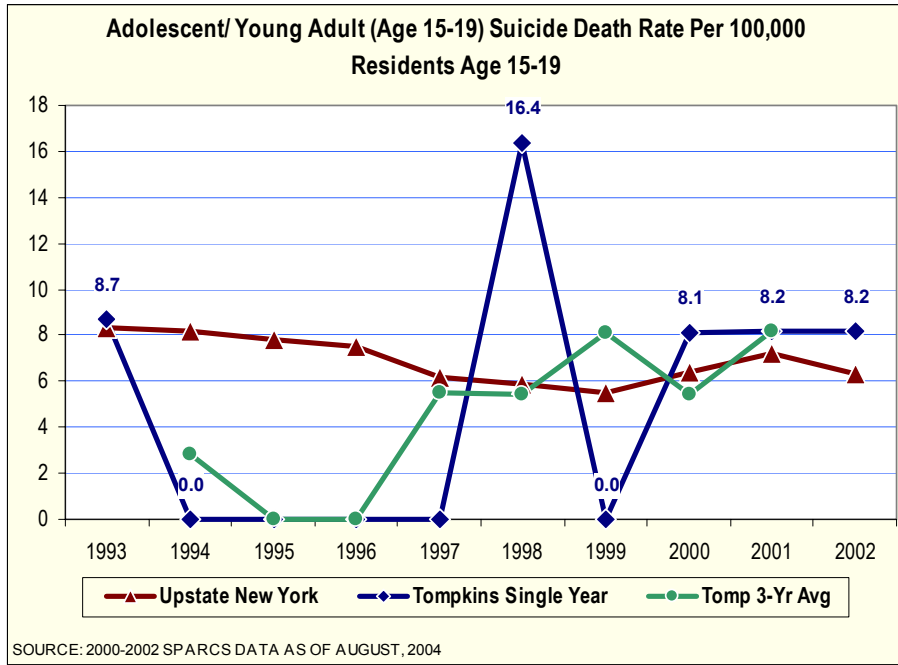


Figure 117 — Self-inflicted injury discharges, regional comparison

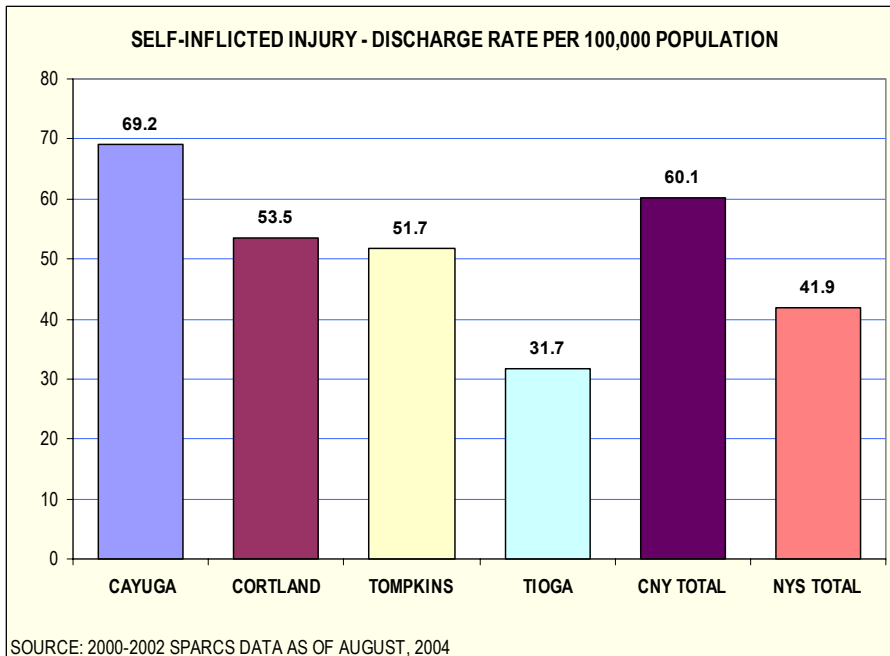


Figure 118 — Self-inflicted injury discharges, 10-year trend

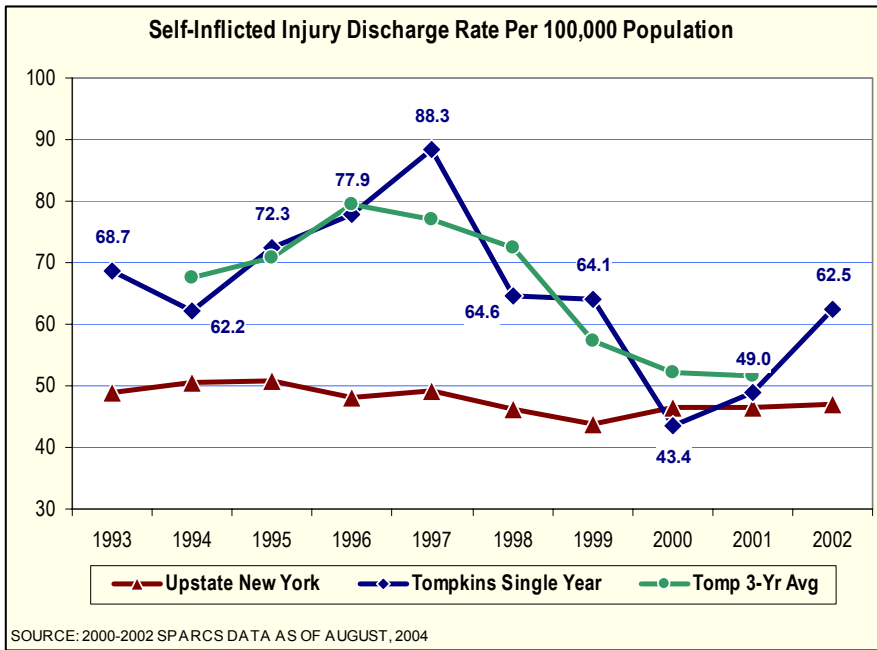


Figure 119 — Self-inflicted injury discharges, Age 15–19, regional comparison

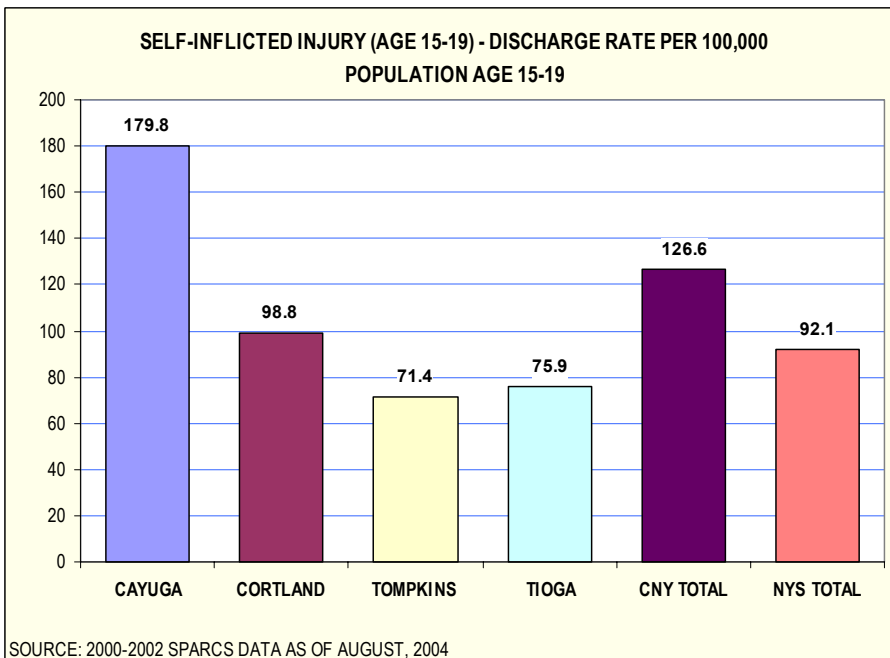


Figure 120 — Self-inflicted injury discharges, Age 15–19, 10-year trend

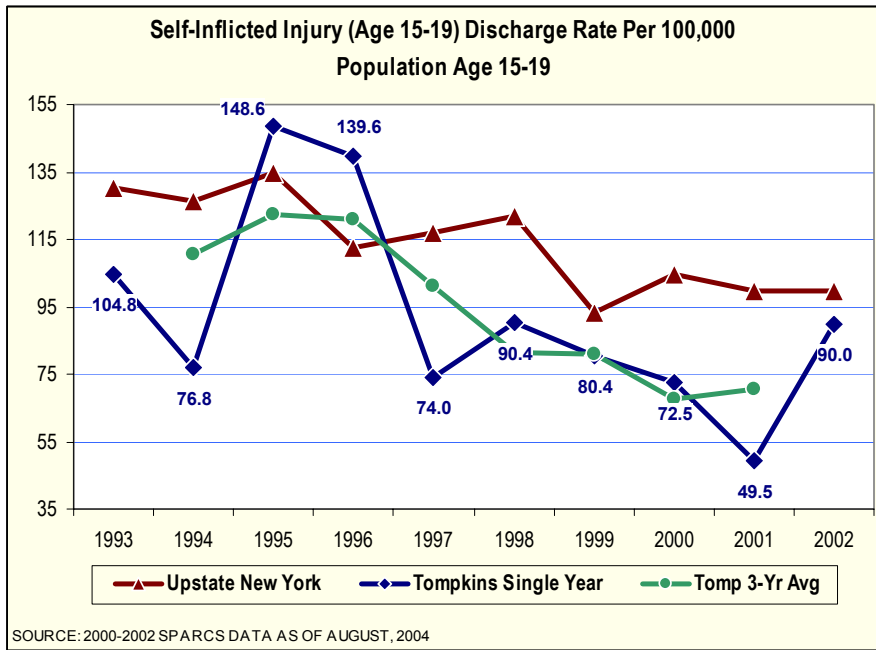


Figure 121 — Homicide deaths, regional comparison

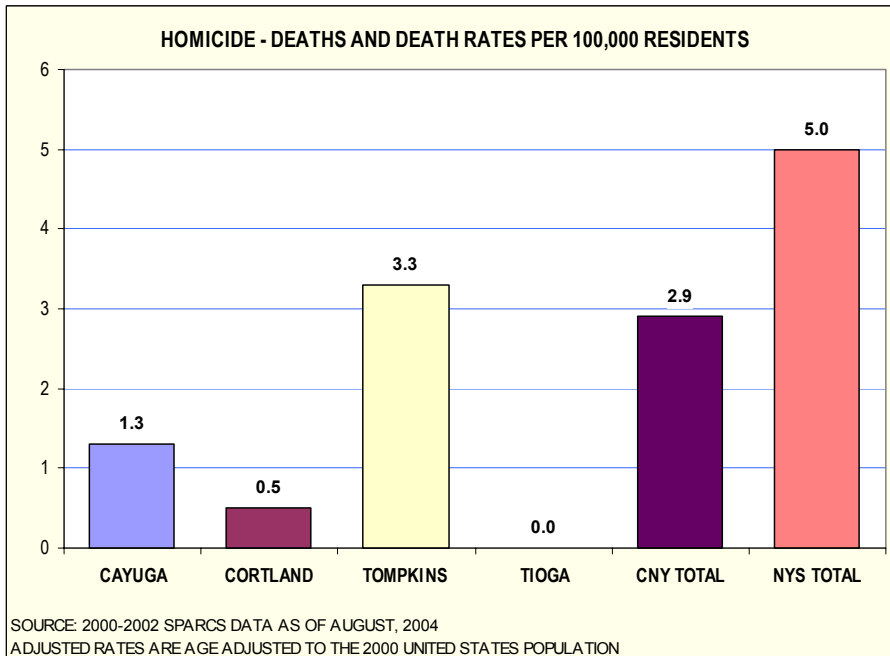


Figure 122 — Homicide deaths, 10-year comparison

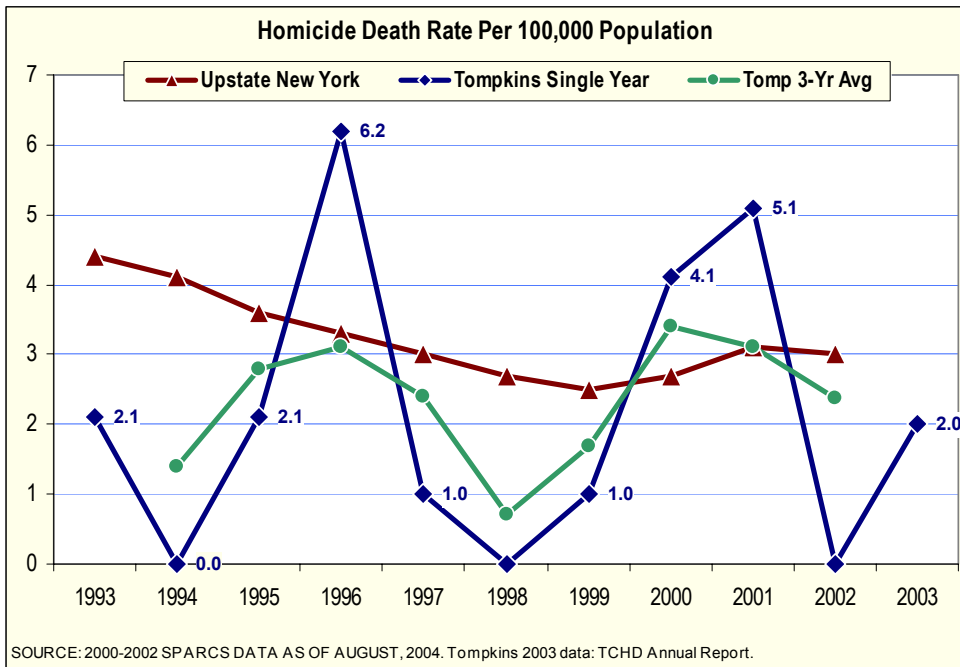


Figure 123 — Assault discharges, regional comparison

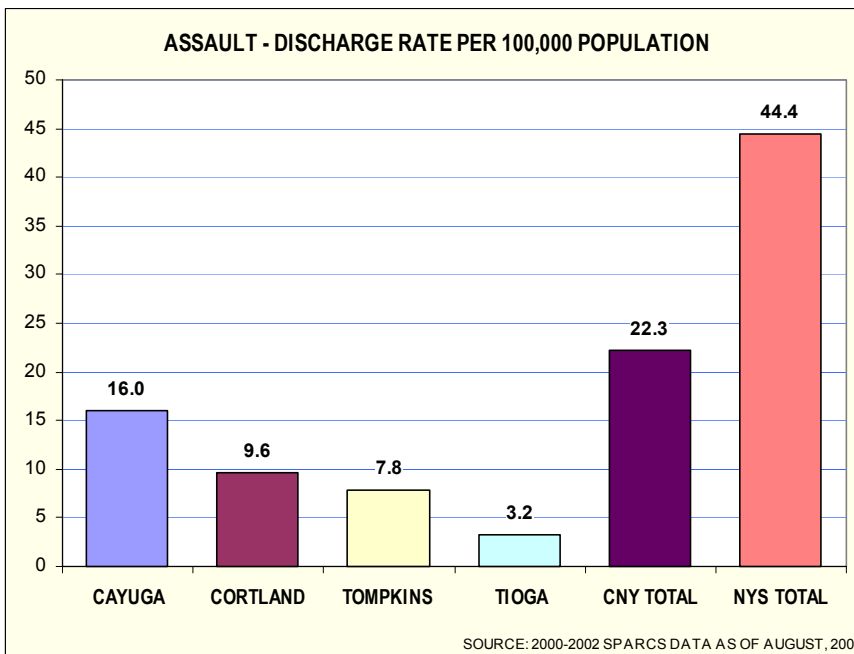


Figure 124 — Assaults: Upstate rates have fallen 39%; Tompkins' 3-yr avgs. have fallen 45%

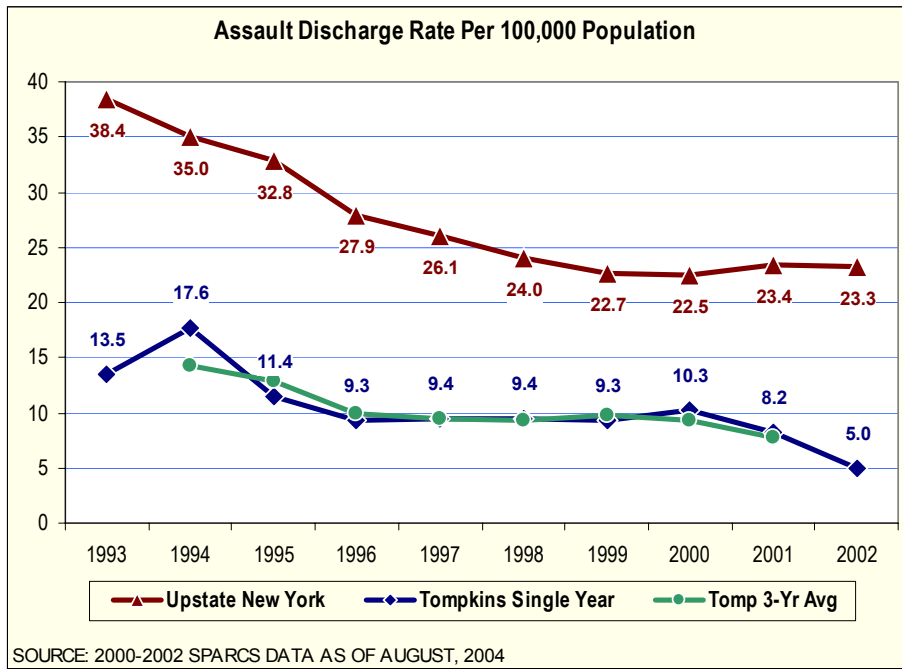


Figure 125 — Motor vehicle deaths, regional comparison

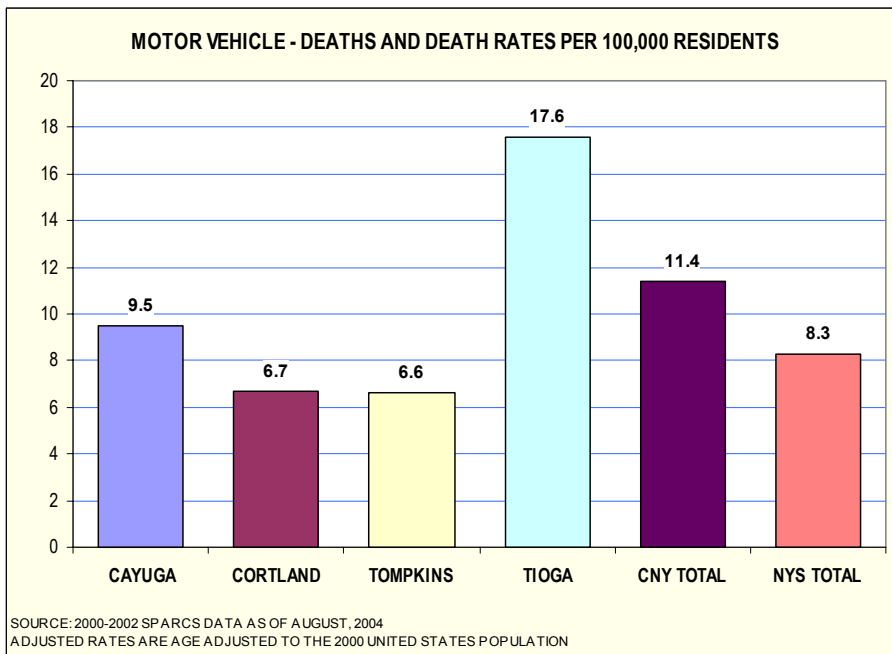


Figure 126 — motor vehicle deaths, 10-year trend

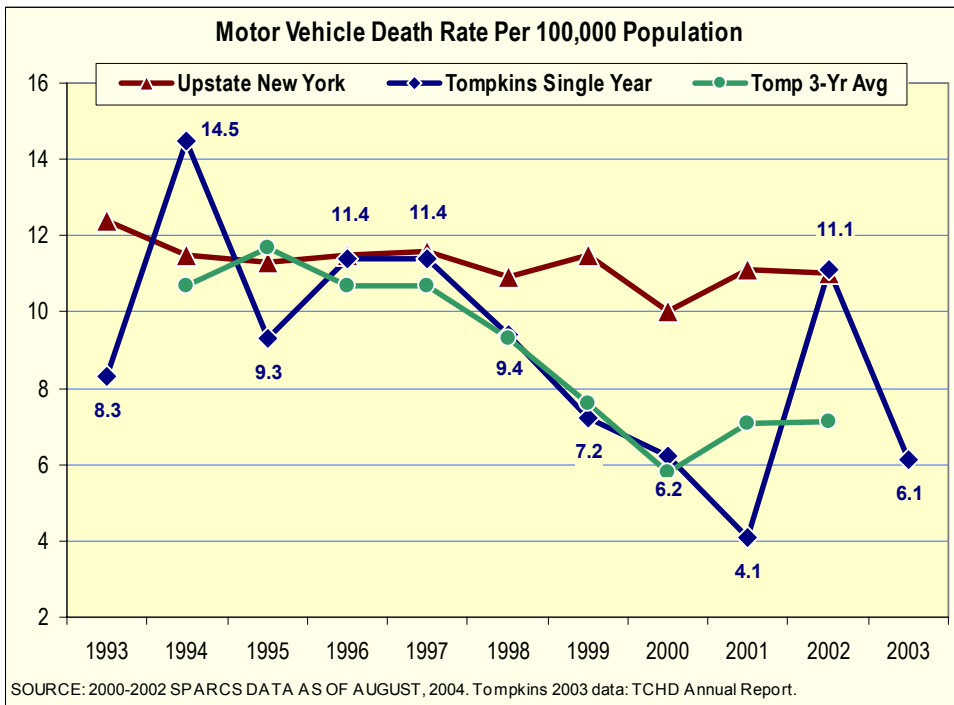


Figure 127 — Alcohol-related M.V. deaths, regional comparison

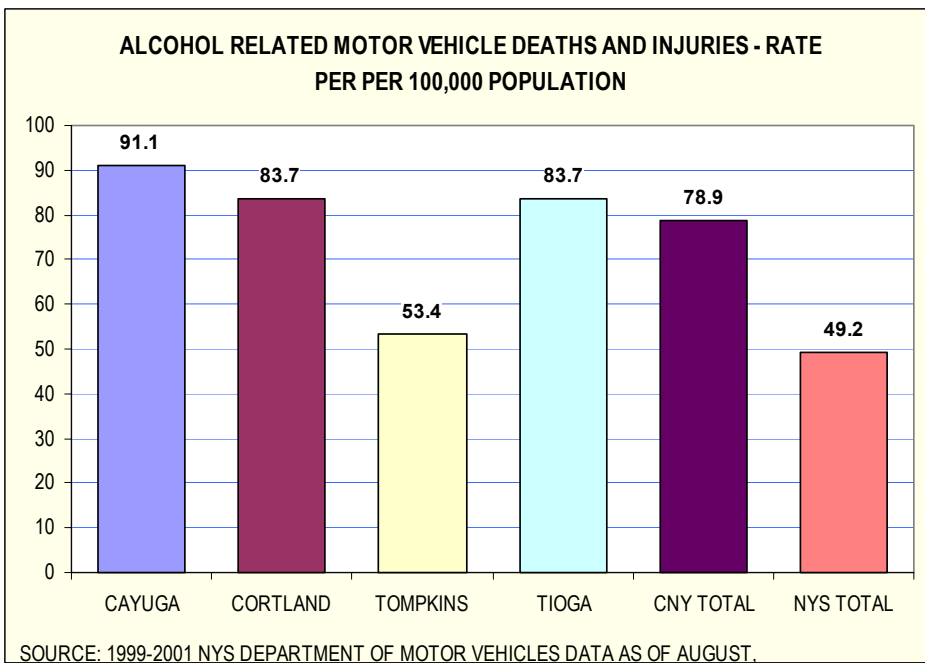


Figure 128 — Drug related hospitalizations, regional comparison

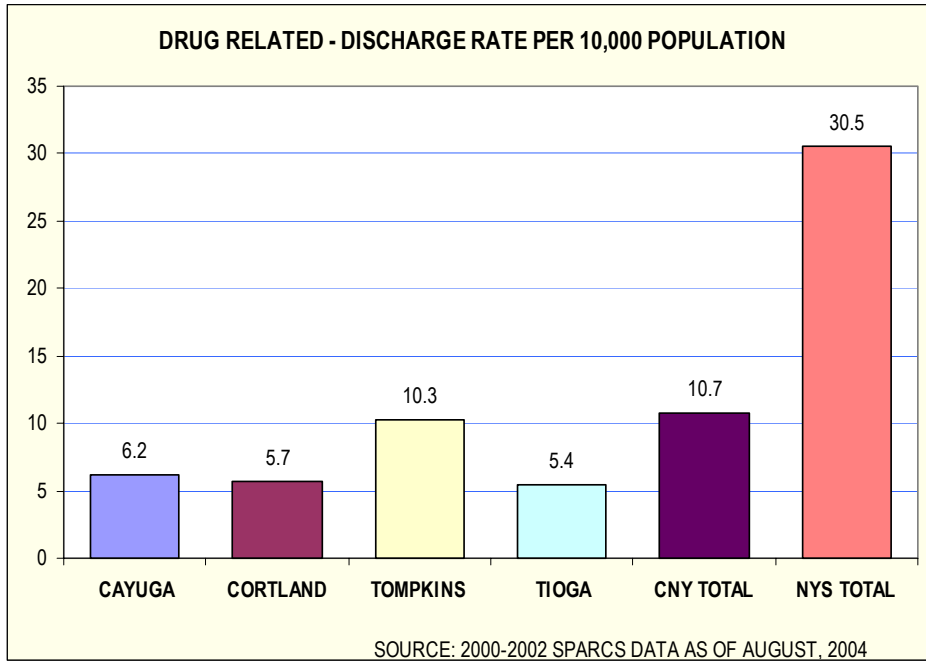


Figure 129 — Traumatic brain injury, regional comparison

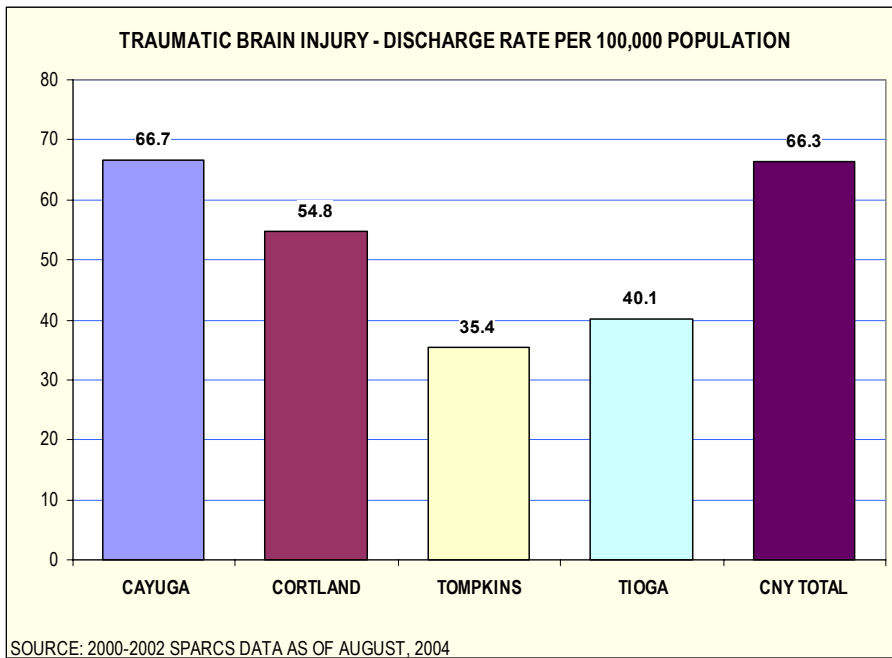


Figure 130 — Traumatic brain injury, 10-year trend

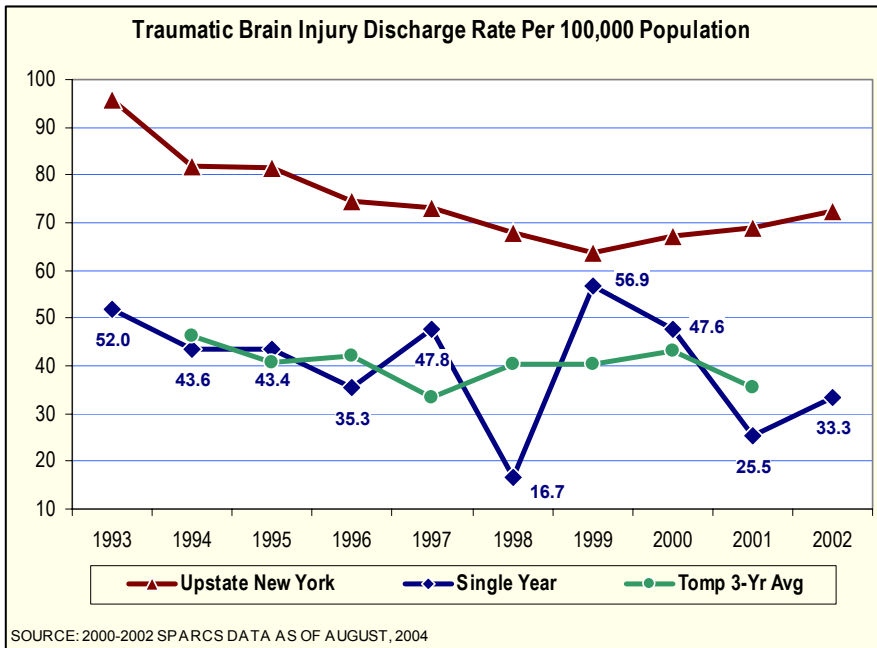
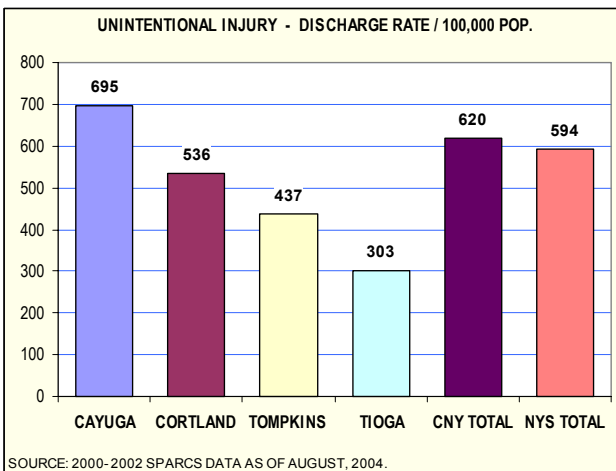


Figure 131 — Unintentional injury discharges, regional comparison and 10-year trend



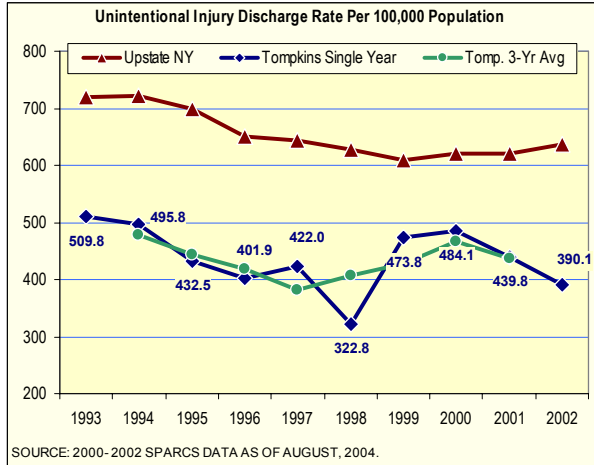


Figure 132 — Unintentional Injury discharges, Age <10 yr.; regional comparison and 10-year trend

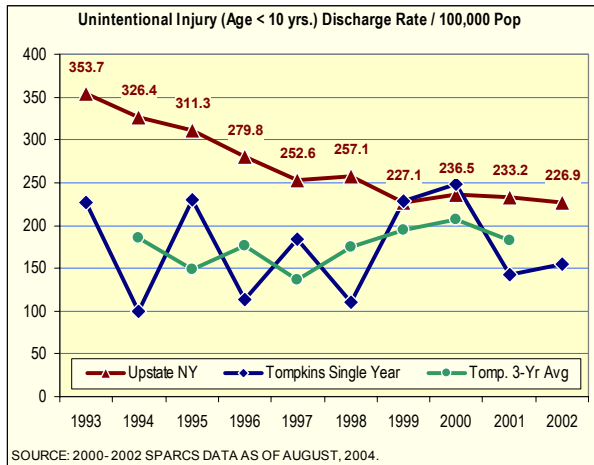
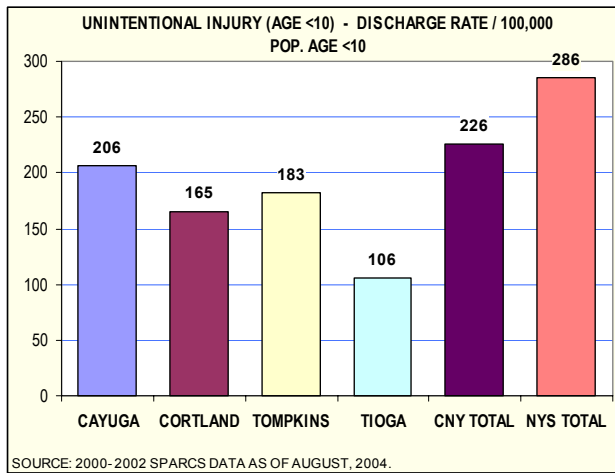


Figure 133 — Unintentional Injury discharges, Age 10–14 yr.; regional comparison and 10-year trend

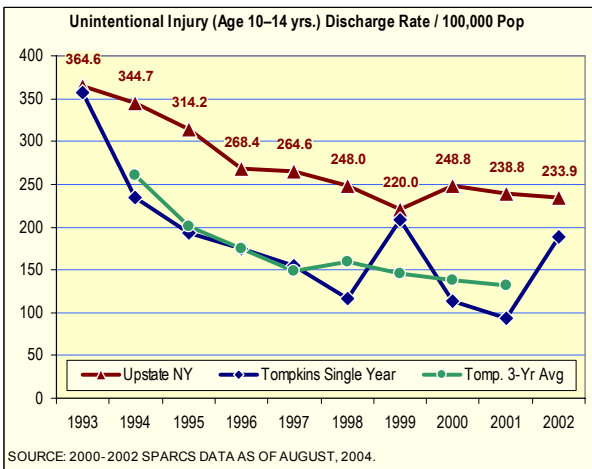
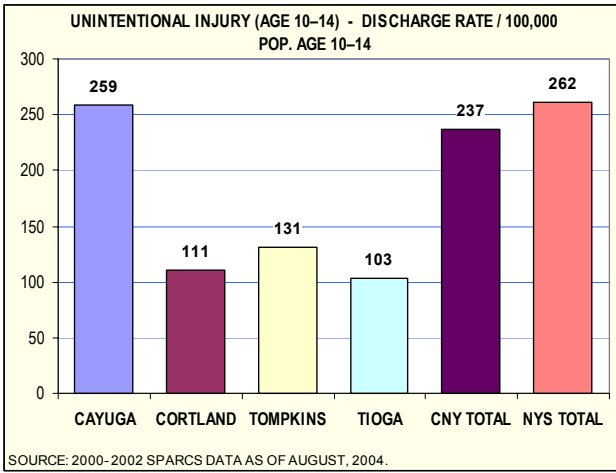
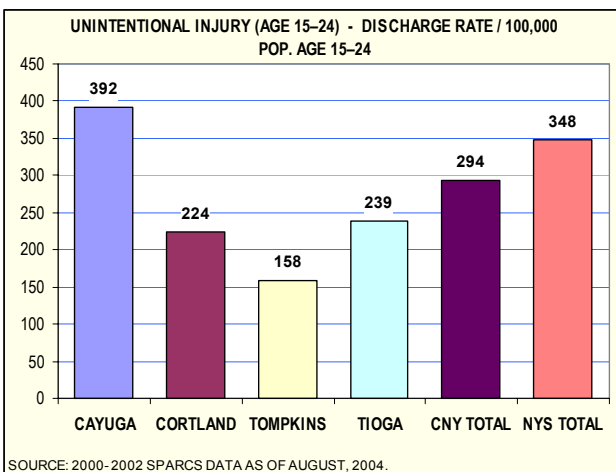


Figure 134 — Unintentional Injury discharges, Age 15–24 yr.; regional comparison and 10-year trend



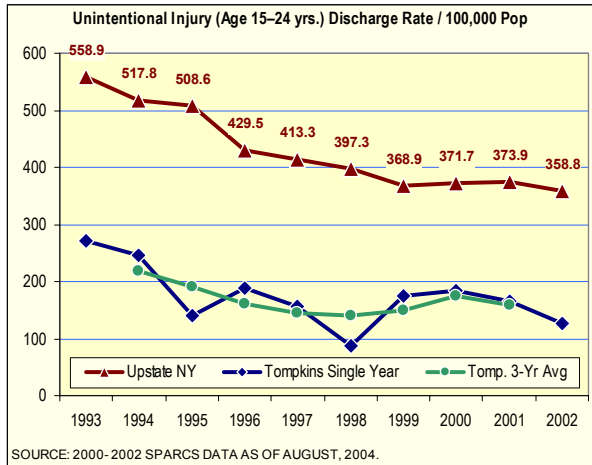


Figure 135 — Unintentional Injury discharges, Age 25–64 yr.; regional comparison and 10-year trend

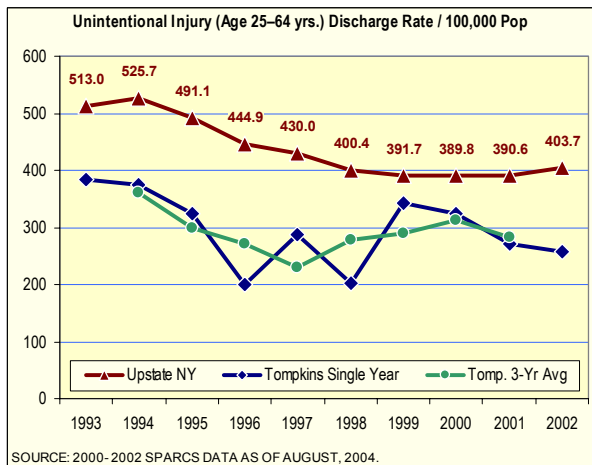
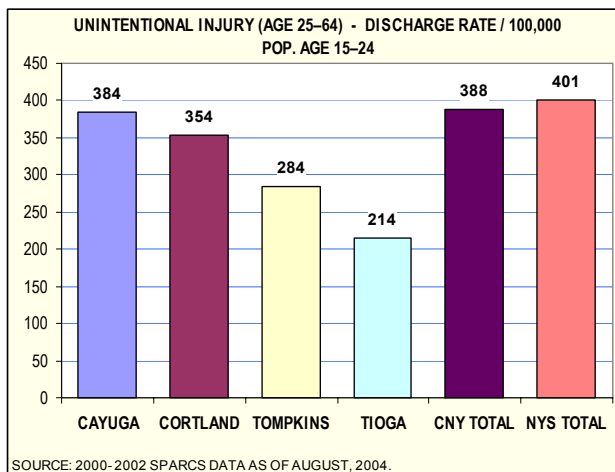


Figure 136 — Unintentional Injury discharges, Age 65+; regional comparison and 10-year trend

