

# Health in 19th-Century Britain

Use the sources to complete tasks 1-5.

Cholera and typhoid were two of the deadliest diseases in 19th-century Britain. Edwin Chadwick's 'General Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain' of 1842 stated that diseases such as these would be reduced "by drainage, proper cleansing, better ventilation, and other means of diminishing atmospheric impurity...".

## Source 1

*At the census of 1871 the number of inhabited houses was 16,460, containing an average of 7.8 persons to a house, an increase of 2,481 houses since the census of 1861.*

Report of the medical officer of health on the sanitary condition of Newcastle upon Tyne... during the year 1873 (tract 25 p14)

## Source 2

*Annual death rate per 1000 living in Newcastle for the past 4 years, compared with the average rate in 21 towns of the United Kingdom*

	1870		1871		1872		1873	
<b>Annual Death Rate</b>	<i>Annual Average in 21 Towns</i>	<i>Annual Rate in Newcastle</i>	<i>Annual Average in 21 Towns</i>	<i>Annual Rate in Newcastle</i>	<i>Annual Average in 21 Towns</i>	<i>Annual Rate in Newcastle</i>	<i>Annual Average in 21 Towns</i>	<i>Annual Rate in Newcastle</i>
	25.8	25.4	26.9	32.2	24.3	26.3	24.3	30.3

Report of the medical officer of health on the sanitary condition of Newcastle upon Tyne... during the year 1873, p15, tract 25

## Source 3

*...much of the general sickness of the town was due to breathing vitiated [poor] air, and drinking unwholesome water, such conditions impairing health and increasing the susceptibility to the influence of the poison of the fevers or infectious diseases... in addition... the atmosphere of the town was polluted.*

Report on the causes of the high death rate in the borough of Newcastle-on-Tyne, December 1873, Northumberland and Durham Medical Society (p4, tract 22)

# Health in 19th-Century Britain

Use the sources to answer questions 1-5.

## Source 4

Number of deaths per age group in different areas of Newcastle in 1873.

	<i>Westgate</i>	<i>St Andrews</i>	<i>St Nicholas</i>	<i>All Saints</i>	<i>Byker</i>
<i>Under 6 years</i>	795	200	211	468	318
<i>6 - 20 years</i>	124	39	48	82	59
<i>20 - 40 years</i>	202	62	123	96	60
<i>40 - 60 years</i>	179	63	110	98	58
<i>60 years +</i>	306	88	66	111	67
<i>Total</i>	1,606	452	558	855	562

Report of the medical officer of health on the sanitary condition of Newcastle upon Tyne... during the year 1873, p19, tract 25

## Tasks

- 1 Study Source 1. What happened to the population of Newcastle between 1861 – 1871?
- 2 Study Source 2. How does the annual death rate in Newcastle compare to that of other towns?
- 3 Study Source 3. Give three reasons why Newcastle had such a high death rate in the 19th century.
- 4 Study Source 4. Which age group had the highest number of deaths?
- 5 Using all of the sources, write a speech to Parliament to persuade them to pass a law to improve living conditions in Newcastle. You may want to mention factors like population increase, working class housing conditions, sanitation, death rates, and age of death.