

HIV/AIDS

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is the final stage of infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which destroys or disables the cells that are responsible for fighting infection. AIDS is diagnosed when HIV has weakened the immune system enough that the body has difficulty fighting infections.⁴³ HIV is predominantly transmitted through sexual contact and injection drug use. While HIV and AIDS disproportionately affect men who have sex with men, a notable proportion of HIV/AIDS diagnoses occur among women and particularly minority women. In 2010, adolescent and adult females accounted for 21.3 percent of new HIV diagnoses at ages 13 and older,

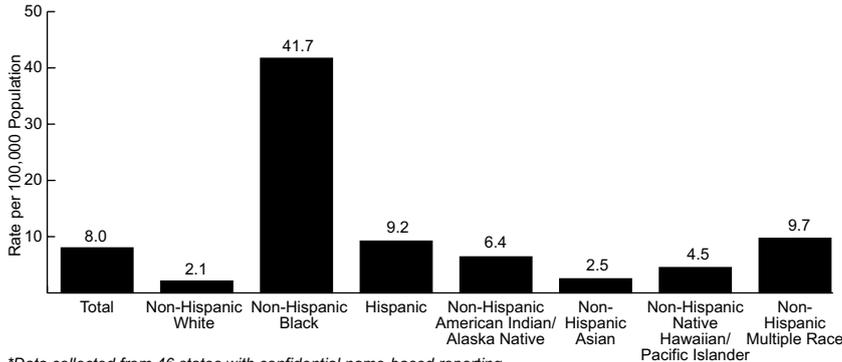
with a rate of 8.0 cases per 100,000 females. The rate of new diagnoses among males was 31.4 per 100,000 (data not shown).⁴⁴

Rates of new HIV cases among adolescent and adult females vary dramatically by race and ethnicity. HIV disproportionately affects non-Hispanic Black females at a rate that is nearly twenty times higher than among non-Hispanic White females (41.7 versus 2.1 cases per 100,000 females, respectively). Non-Hispanic Black females accounted for two-thirds of all new HIV diagnoses among females.⁴⁴ New HIV diagnoses are also elevated among Hispanic, non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native, and non-Hispanic females of multiple races (9.2, 6.4, and 9.7 cases per 100,000 females, respectively).

Early detection of HIV infection is critical in preventing transmission of the virus to others, and persons aware of their HIV infection can benefit from advances in medicine that may significantly prolong their lives. Early entry to care can also produce significant cost savings for medical treatment.⁴⁵ Despite these individual and societal benefits, a sizeable proportion of people identified as HIV-positive receive an AIDS diagnosis simultaneously or within a year of HIV diagnosis. In 2009, 30.3 percent of HIV-positive females received an AIDS diagnosis within 12 months of their HIV diagnosis, which was slightly less than for males (33.1 percent, all ages included).

Estimated Rates of New HIV Cases Reported Among Females Aged 13 and Older, by Race/Ethnicity, 2010*

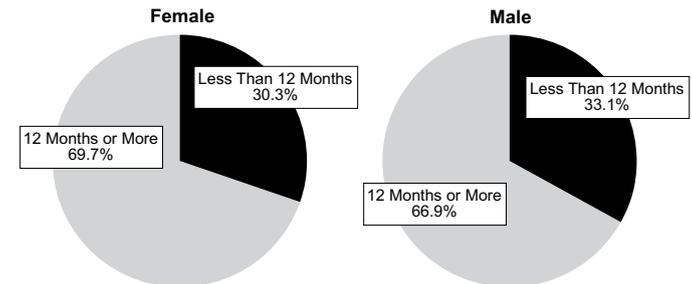
Source II.17: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HIV Surveillance Report



*Data collected from 46 states with confidential name-based reporting.

Time to an AIDS Diagnosis After a Diagnosis of HIV Infection (All Ages), by Sex, 2009*

Source II.17: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HIV Surveillance Report



*Data collected from 46 states with confidential name-based reporting.