

## Fast Facts

- One in four people living with HIV infection in the United States are women.
- Most new HIV infections in women are from heterosexual contact (84%).
- Only about half of women who are diagnosed with HIV are in care, and even fewer (4 in 10) have the virus under control.

At the end of 2010, one in four people living with HIV in the United States were women.<sup>a</sup> Black/African American\* and Hispanic/Latino<sup>b</sup> women continue to be disproportionately affected by HIV, compared with women of other races/ethnicities.

Not all US women who are diagnosed with HIV are getting the care they need. In 19 US jurisdictions with complete reporting, of all women who were diagnosed with HIV by year-end 2009 and alive in 2010, only 53% were staying in care in 2010, and 42% had viral suppression.

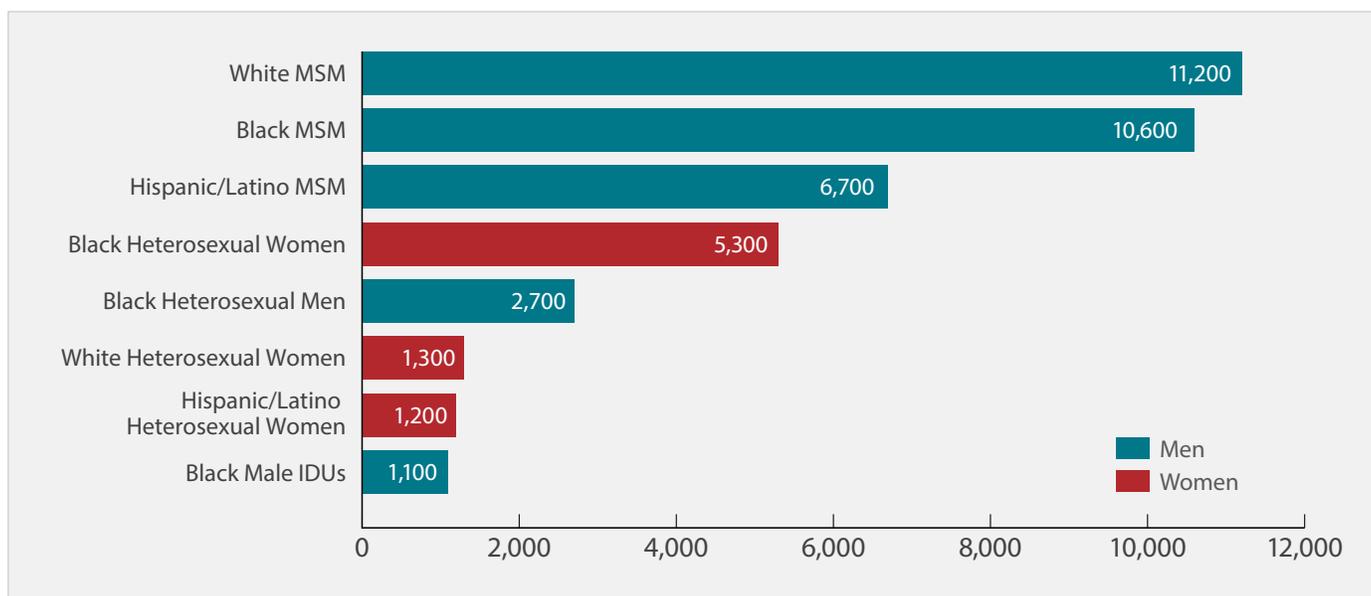
\* Referred to as African American in this fact sheet.

## The Numbers

### New HIV Infections<sup>c</sup>

- Women made up 20% (9,500) of the estimated 47,500 new HIV infections in the United States in 2010. Eighty-four percent of these new infections (8,000) were from heterosexual contact.<sup>d</sup>
- When comparing groups by race/ethnicity, gender, and transmission category, the fourth largest number of all new HIV infections in the United States in 2010 (5,300) occurred among African American women with heterosexual contact (see bar graph). Of the total number of estimated new HIV infections among women, 64% (6,100) were in African Americans, 18% (1,700) were in whites, and 15% (1,400) were in Hispanic/Latino women.

Estimated New HIV Infections in the United States for the Most-Affected Subpopulations, 2010



Source: CDC. Estimated HIV incidence among adults and adolescents in the United States, 2007–2010. *HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report* 2012;17(4). Subpopulations representing 2% or less of the overall US epidemic are not reflected in this chart. Abbreviations: MSM, men who have sex with men; IDU, injection drug user.

<sup>a</sup> Women are defined in this fact sheet as adult and adolescent females aged 13 and older.

<sup>b</sup> Hispanic/Latino women can be of any race.

<sup>c</sup> New HIV infections refer to HIV incidence or the number of people who are newly infected with HIV, whether they are aware of their infection or not.

<sup>d</sup> Heterosexual contact with a person known to have, or be at high risk for, HIV infection.

<sup>e</sup> HIV and AIDS diagnoses indicate when a person is diagnosed with HIV infection or AIDS, but do not indicate when the person was infected.

## HIV and AIDS Diagnoses<sup>e</sup> and Deaths

- In 2011, an estimated 10,257 women aged 13 years or older received a diagnosis of HIV infection in the United States (21% of the all estimated diagnoses during 2011), down from the 12,146 new diagnoses among women in 2008.
- Women accounted for 25% (7,949) of the estimated 32,052 AIDS diagnoses (including children) in 2011 and represent 20% (232,902) of the 1,155,792 cumulative AIDS diagnoses (including children) in the United States from the beginning of the epidemic through the end of 2011.
- Among women ever diagnosed with AIDS, an estimated 4,014 died during 2010, and by the end of 2010, an estimated 111,940 had died since the beginning of the epidemic.
- At some point in their lifetimes, an estimated 1 in 32 African American women will be diagnosed with HIV infection.

## Why Are Women Affected by HIV?

- Some women may be **unaware of their male partner's risk factors** for HIV (such as injection drug use or having sex with other men) and may not use condoms.
- Women have a much higher risk for getting HIV during **vaginal sex without a condom** than men do, and **anal sex without a condom** is riskier for women than vaginal sex without a condom. More than 20% of women aged 20 to 39 who responded to a national survey reported anal sex in the past year.
- Women may be afraid that their partner will leave them or even physically abuse them if they try to talk about condom use.
- Some **sexually transmitted infections (STIs)**, such as gonorrhea and syphilis, greatly increase the likelihood of getting or spreading HIV.
- Women who have been **sexually abused** may be more likely than women with no abuse history to engage in sexual behaviors like exchanging sex for drugs, having multiple partners, or having sex with a partner who is physically abusive when asked to use a condom.
- Some HIV infections among women are due to **injection drug and other substance use**—either directly (sharing drug injection equipment contaminated with HIV) or indirectly (engaging in high-risk behaviors while under the influence of drugs or alcohol).
- The greater number of **people living with HIV (prevalence)** in African American and Hispanic/Latino communities and the fact that people tend to have sex with partners of the same race/ethnicity means that women from these communities face a greater risk of HIV infection with each new sexual encounter.

## What CDC Is Doing

Through its High-Impact Prevention approach, CDC is working with state and local partners throughout the United States to identify and implement the most cost-effective and scalable interventions in the geographic areas hardest hit by HIV and among the populations most affected within those areas. Activities include:

- Funding to health departments and community-based organizations:
  - Awards of \$339 million over 5 years (2012-2016) to health departments to direct resources to the geographic areas of greatest need and prioritize the HIV prevention strategies that will have the greatest impact on the US epidemic.
  - New funding to provide training and technical assistance for staff of health departments, community-based organizations, and health care organizations to help them link HIV-positive people to care, retain or re-engage them in care, and help them to achieve viral suppression. Estimated annual funding will be \$26 million.
- Phases of the *Act Against AIDS* campaign ([www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids](http://www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids)), for example, *Take Charge. Take the Test.*, to encourage African American women to get tested for HIV, and *Let's Stop HIV Together*, to address stigma and raise awareness.
- The *Act Against AIDS Leadership Initiative*, a partnership between CDC and leading national civic and social organizations representing the populations hardest hit by HIV and AIDS, to intensify HIV prevention efforts in these populations.
- Research on microbicides—creams or gels that can be applied vaginally or anally before sexual contact to prevent HIV transmission.
- Prevention campaigns, better surveillance, and education programs that work to further reduce mother-to-child HIV transmission in the United States. The *Act Against AIDS* campaign *One Test. Two Lives.*, for example, provides resources to help obstetric providers test their patients.
- Support and technical assistance to health departments and community-based organizations to deliver effective behavioral interventions ([www.effectiveinterventions.org](http://www.effectiveinterventions.org)).

View the bibliography and other resources at [www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/gender/women](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/gender/women).

### Additional Resources

**CDC-INFO**  
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)  
[www.cdc.gov/info](http://www.cdc.gov/info)

**CDC HIV Website**  
[www.cdc.gov/hiv](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv)

**CDC Act Against AIDS Campaign**  
[www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids](http://www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids)