

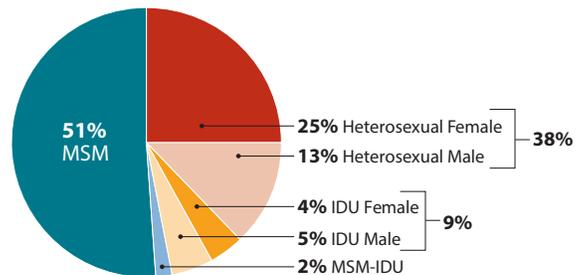
HIV among African Americans

HIV is a crisis in African American communities, threatening the health and well-being of African American men and women across the United States. While African Americans face the most severe burden of HIV and AIDS of any racial/ethnic group in the nation, prevention efforts have helped to maintain stability in the annual number of new HIV infections among African Americans for more than a decade. Additionally, recent CDC data found indications of an encouraging decline in new infections among African American women. Still, African American heterosexual women continue to be far more affected by HIV than women of any other race or ethnicity, and young black gay and bisexual men now account for more new infections than any other group in the United States.

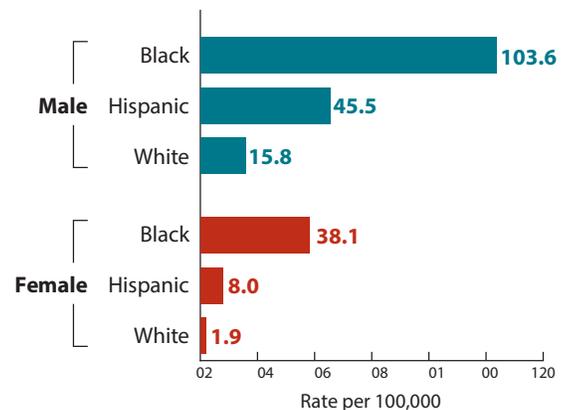
A Snapshot

- CDC estimates show that blacks account for almost half of all new infections in the United States each year (44 percent) as well as almost half of all people living with HIV (44 percent).
- Approximately one in 16 black men will be diagnosed with HIV during their lifetime, as will one in 32 black women.
- Among blacks, men account for 70 percent of new HIV infections. Women account for 30 percent.
- Within the African American community, gay and bisexual men are the most affected, followed by heterosexual women.
 - Black men account for almost one-third (31 percent) of all new HIV infections in the United States. The rate of new HIV infections for black men is more than six times as high as the rate among white men, and more than twice that of Hispanic men.
 - Among black men, the majority of new infections occur among men who have sex with men (MSM).¹
 - Young black MSM are severely affected and now account for more new infections (4,800 in 2010) than any other subgroup of MSM by race/ethnicity and age.
 - In a study of 21 major U.S. cities in 2008, almost a third (28 percent) of black MSM were infected, compared to 16 percent of white MSM. Among the black MSM who were HIV-infected, nearly 6 out of 10 (59 percent) were unaware that they were infected.
 - Comparing 2008 to 2010, new HIV infections among black women decreased 21 percent (from 7,700 to 6,100); however, black women account for 13 percent of all new HIV infections and the majority (64 percent) of all new infections among women overall. The HIV incidence rate for black women remains 20 times as high as that of white women, and almost five times that of Hispanic women.

Estimated New HIV Infections among Blacks, 2010, by Transmission Category



Estimated Rate of New HIV Infections, 2010, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity



¹ The term men who have sex with men is used in CDC surveillance systems. It indicates the behaviors that transmit HIV infection, rather than how individuals self-identify in terms of their sexuality



- HIV treatment helps people with HIV live healthy lives and prevents transmission of the virus to partners. However, too few African Americans diagnosed with HIV receive the care and treatment they need. A recent CDC study found that among blacks who have been diagnosed with HIV, 75 percent were linked to care, 48 percent received regular care, 46 percent were prescribed antiretroviral therapy, and 35 percent achieve viral suppression (that is, the virus is under control at a level that helps them stay healthy and reduces the risk of transmission).
- Blacks account for almost half of all those with AIDS who have died in the United States since the beginning of the epidemic.

Multiple, Complex Factors Increase Risk

- **High prevalence of HIV:** African Americans face a higher risk of being exposed to HIV infection with each sexual encounter than do other racial/ethnic groups. This is because the prevalence of HIV is greater in African American communities than in any other racial/ethnic group, and because African Americans are likely to have sexual relations with other African Americans. Therefore, even with levels of individual risk behaviors (e.g., sex without a condom, multiple partners) that are comparable to other races/ethnicities, African Americans face a higher risk of infection with each sexual encounter.
- **Higher prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs):** The prevalence of STDs is higher in African Americans than in any other racial/ethnic group. Because STDs can place individuals at higher risk for HIV infection, higher STD prevalence may contribute to higher HIV incidence among black men and women.
- **Stigma:** Fear of disclosing risk behavior or sexual orientation may prevent African Americans from seeking testing, prevention and treatment services, and support from friends and family.
- **Socioeconomic factors:** The social and economic realities that exist in some African American communities may lead to increased HIV risk. These include poverty, racial discrimination, less access to healthcare, and higher rates of incarceration, which can disrupt social networks and decrease the number of available partners for women.

If you are a member of the news media and need more information, please visit www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/Newsroom or contact the News Media Line at CDC's National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention (404-639-8895 or NCHHSTPMediaTeam@cdc.gov).