2021 CDC analyses\textsuperscript{1,2} provide the clearest picture to date of how common and costly sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are in the United States. CDC’s latest estimates indicate that 20% of the U.S. population – approximately one in five people – had an STI on any given day in 2018, and STIs acquired that year cost the American healthcare system nearly $16 billion in direct medical costs alone.

CDC’s analyses included eight common STIs, four of which are easily treated and cured if diagnosed early: chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and trichomoniasis. Also included in the analyses are four sexually transmitted viruses: human papillomavirus (HPV), herpes simplex virus type 2 (HSV-2), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and hepatitis B virus (HBV). Many of these infections go undetected because they often have no symptoms and can have serious health consequences.

STIs REMAIN COMMON AND COSTLY TO THE NATION’S HEALTH

STIs IN 2018 (PREVALENCE)

1 in 5 people in the U.S. have an STI

Nearly 68 million infections

ANNUAL NEW STIs IN 2018 (INCIDENCE)

26 million

STIs acquired in 2018

DIRECT LIFETIME MEDICAL COSTS OF 2018 NEW STIs

Nearly 16 billion

Total medical costs (in 2018 dollars)

NEARLY HALF OF ALL NEW INFECTIONS OCCUR AMONG NATION’S YOUTH

America’s youth shoulder a substantial burden of sexually transmitted infections. Nearly half (45.5%) of all new STIs in the country occur among young people (ages 15-24).

LATEST CDC ESTIMATES REVEAL NEARLY 68 MILLION STIs IN THE U.S., AND MORE THAN 26 MILLION NEW INFECTIONS

Estimated number of new and existing sexually transmitted infections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STI</th>
<th>INCIDENCE: The number of STIs acquired in 2018</th>
<th>PREVALENCE: The number of STIs at any given point in 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPV</td>
<td>13M</td>
<td>42.5M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSV-2</td>
<td>572,000</td>
<td>18.6M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trichomoniasis</td>
<td>2.6M</td>
<td>6.9M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlamydia</td>
<td>2.4M</td>
<td>4M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonorrhea</td>
<td>209,000</td>
<td>1.6M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV* (ages 13 and older)</td>
<td>984,000</td>
<td>32,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBV</td>
<td>103,000</td>
<td>8,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syphilis</td>
<td>156,000</td>
<td>146,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STIs COST THE U.S. HEALTHCARE SYSTEM BILLIONS EACH YEAR

In 2018, new infections totaled nearly $16 billion in direct lifetime medical costs.

- CHLAMYDIA, GONORRHEA, and SYPHILIS combined accounted for $1.1 billion in direct medical costs. Care for young people (ages 15-24) accounted for about 60% of these costs.
- HIV* accounted for $13.7 billion. Care for men accounted for about 45% of these costs. Care for women represented nearly 75% of all STI-related direct lifetime medical costs (not including HIV care).
- HPV accounted for $755 million. Care for women accounted for about 64% of these costs.
- All other STIs accounted for $1.4 billion. Care for women accounted for about 60% of these costs.

While medical costs alone are significant, the overall cost of STIs is higher when factoring in costs associated with lost productivity, other non-medical costs and STI prevention.

For more information visit www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/newsroom

Fighting STIs: prevention, diagnosis, and prompt treatment

PREVENTION

Because STIs are preventable, significant reductions in new infections are not only possible, they are urgently needed. Prevention can minimize the negative, long-term consequences of STIs and reduce healthcare costs. To do this, prevention efforts should:

- Focus on hard-hit populations. Young people and women face some of the biggest impacts and most significant consequences of STIs.
- Consider the social, cultural & economic conditions that make it more difficult for some sexually active people to stay healthy (e.g., poverty, unstable housing, drug use, lack of medical insurance or medical home, high burden of STIs in some communities).

More information on STD prevention is available here.

DIAGNOSIS & PROMPT TREATMENT

For all individuals who are sexually active – particularly young people and women – STI screening and prompt treatment (if infected) are critical to protect a person’s health and prevent transmission to others. If you are sexually active, be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about STI testing and which tests may be right for you. CDC’s STI screening recommendations are available here and information for providers can be found here.