

# HIV among African Americans

HIV is a crisis that threatens the health and well-being of African Americans across the United States. While African Americans continue to face the most severe burden of HIV of any racial/ethnic group in the nation, prevention efforts have led to encouraging decreases in new infections. This decrease was driven by steep declines in new infections among African American women (21 percent decline from 2010 to 2016).

After years of troubling increases, infections stabilized among African American gay and bisexual men between 2010 and 2016. Still, young African American gay and bisexual men account for more new diagnoses than any other group, and HIV continues to affect African American heterosexual women more than women of any other race or ethnicity.

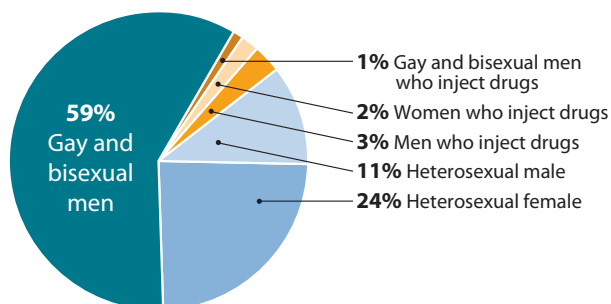
## A Snapshot

- In 2016, 17,269 African Americans received an HIV diagnosis.
- African Americans represent almost half (42 percent or 476,100 people) of the estimated 1.1 million people with diagnosed and undiagnosed HIV in the United States — and almost half (44 percent) of those with HIV diagnosed in 2016. African American gay and bisexual men are the most affected, followed by heterosexual women.
- African Americans account for almost half of all those with stage 4 HIV, or AIDS, who have died in the United States since the beginning of the epidemic. However, death rates among African Americans with diagnosed HIV declined 17 percent from 2010 to 2015.

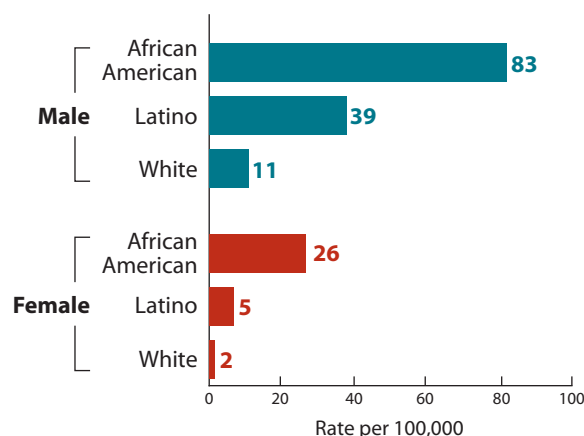
## African American Women

- African American women accounted for 11 percent of all HIV diagnoses in 2016 and more than half of diagnoses among women overall (60 percent). The HIV diagnosis rate for African American women remains 15 times as high as that of white women, and almost five times that of Latino women.
- If current rates persist, CDC projects that approximately one in 48 African American women will receive a diagnosis of HIV during their lifetimes.

**HIV Diagnoses among African Americans  
2016, by Transmission Route**



**Rate of HIV Diagnoses, 2016,  
by Gender and Race/Ethnicity**



## African American Men

- African American men accounted for almost one-third (32 percent) of all HIV diagnoses in 2016. The rate of HIV diagnoses for African American men was nearly eight times as high as the rate among white men, and more than twice that of Latino men. Among African American men, most new diagnoses occur among gay and bisexual men.
- If current rates persist, CDC projects that approximately one in 20 African American men, and one in two African American gay and bisexual men will receive a diagnosis of HIV during their lifetimes.

## HIV Treatment Disparities

- Treatment helps people with HIV live healthy lives and prevents transmission of the virus to partners. However, too few African Americans with HIV receive the care and treatment they need. CDC estimates that 85 percent of African Americans with HIV in 2015 were aware of their status. Just over half (54 percent) of African Americans with diagnosed HIV had achieved viral suppression in 2015. People who take treatment daily as prescribed and maintain an undetectable viral load have effectively no risk of sexually transmitting the virus to an HIV-negative partner.

## Multiple, Complex Factors Increase Risk

- **High prevalence of HIV:** Although levels of individual risk behaviors (e.g. sex without a condom, multiple partners) are comparable to other races/ethnicities, African Americans face a higher risk of being exposed to HIV with each sexual encounter than other racial/ethnic groups. This is because the prevalence of HIV is greater in African American communities than any other racial/ethnic group, and because African Americans are likely to have sex with other African Americans.
- **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 people at higher risk for HIV, higher STD prevalence may contribute to more HIV transmissions among African American men and women.
- **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](http://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](mailto:NCHHSTPMediaTeam@cdc.gov).