HIV is a serious health threat to Latino communities, which bear a disproportionate share of the HIV burden in the United States. Factors driving the HIV epidemic in this population are as diverse as Latino communities themselves. Prevention efforts led to promising declines in new diagnoses among Latinos from 2005 to 2010. However, those declines have begun to stall and new infections remained stable from 2010 to 2016, reinforcing the need for expanded access to proven HIV prevention programs for this important population.

A Snapshot
- In 2016, 9,831 Latinos received an HIV diagnosis.
- Latinos represent about 17 percent of the U.S. population, but account for about one-fifth (22 percent or 254,600 people in 2016) of the estimated 1.1 million people with diagnosed and undiagnosed HIV in the United States — and a quarter (25 percent) of all people with HIV diagnosed in 2016.
- Stage 4 HIV, or AIDS, continues to claim the lives of too many Latino men and women. Since the beginning of the epidemic, more than 100,000 Latinos with AIDS have died.

Latino Men
- Latino men accounted for 88 percent of diagnoses among Latinos in 2016.
- The HIV diagnosis rate among Latino men was more than three times that of white men in 2016.
  - 87 percent of new diagnoses among Latino men are among gay and bisexual men.
  - While new HIV infections among gay and bisexual men overall stabilized between 2010 and 2016, infections among Latino gay and bisexual men increased 30 percent during this period.
- If current rates persist, CDC projects that approximately one in 48 Latino men and one in four Latino gay and bisexual men will be diagnosed with HIV during their lifetimes.

Latino Women
- The HIV diagnosis rate among Latino women in 2016 was more than three times that of white women.
- If current rates persist, CDC projects that approximately one in 227 Latino women will be diagnosed with HIV during their lifetimes.
Regional Differences

- There are substantial regional differences in the HIV burden among Latinos across the United States. For example:
  - The HIV diagnosis rate is highest among Latinos in the Northeast. Latinos in the Northeast are also more likely than those in other regions to have been infected by intravenous drug use.
  - Latinos with diagnosed HIV in the South are more likely than those in the Northeast to have acquired HIV through male-to-male sexual contact.

HIV Treatment Disparities

- HIV treatment helps people with HIV live healthy lives and prevents transmission of the virus to partners. However, too few Latinos with HIV receive the care and treatment they need. CDC estimates that 83 percent of Latinos with HIV in 2015 were aware of their status, and 60 percent of Latinos 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 sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and higher rates of HIV: STDs can place people at greater risk for HIV. The STD burden is high among Latinos, which may contribute to more HIV transmissions in Latino communities. Disproportionate rates of HIV among Latinos and the current high prevalence of HIV in Latino communities also increase the likelihood that Latinos will encounter partners with HIV, which places them at greater risk.

- Social and economic factors: The social and economic realities of some Latinos’ lives, including poverty, discrimination and lack of access to healthcare, can increase HIV risk. Language barriers may also affect the quality of care.

- Stigma: The stigma associated with HIV and homosexuality may help to spread HIV in Latino communities. In some communities, the cultural value of machismo may create reluctance to acknowledge sensitive, yet risky behaviors, such as male-to-male sexual contact or substance abuse. Fear of disclosing risk behavior or sexual orientation may prevent Latinos from seeking testing, treatment and prevention services and support from friends and family. As a result, too many Latinos lack critical information about how to prevent infection.

- Cultural factors: Latino culture in the United States is diverse. Research shows that Latinos born in different countries have different behavioral risk factors for HIV. For example, data suggest that Latinos born in Puerto Rico are more likely than other Latinos to contract HIV as a result of injection drug use or from high-risk heterosexual contact. By contrast, sexual contact with other men is the primary cause of HIV infection among men born in places such as Mexico and the 50 U.S. states.

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.