

Gay and bisexual men – referred to in CDC surveillance systems as men who have sex with men (MSM)¹ – continue to be the risk group most severely affected by HIV in the United States. However, from 2008 to 2014 the number of annual HIV infections among gay or bisexual men remained steady at about 26,000 per year, an encouraging stabilization after more than a decade of increases. To sustain and accelerate this progress, there is an urgent need to expand access to proven HIV prevention programs for gay and bisexual men.

A Snapshot

Overall, MSM account for:

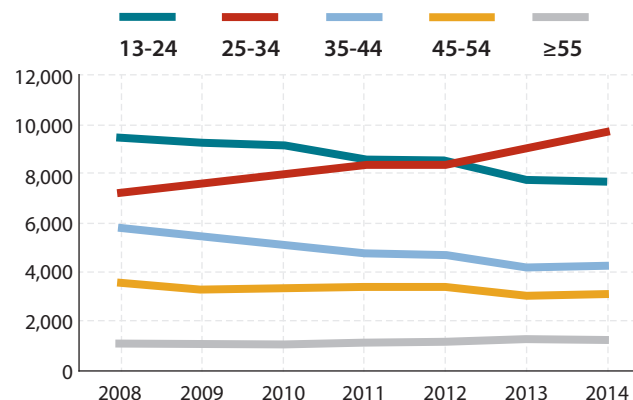
- 56 percent (estimated 615,400 persons in 2014) of the estimated 1.1 million people living with HIV in the United States.
- More than two-thirds of all new HIV infections each year (70 percent, or an estimated 26,200 infections in 2014).

While CDC estimates that four percent of men in the United States are MSM, the rate of new HIV diagnoses among them is more than 44 times that of other men (rate ranges from 522 to 989 per 100,000 MSM compared to 12 per 100,000 other men).

The latest CDC analysis shows that:

- From 2008 to 2014, HIV infections stabilized among MSM overall.
 - During the same time period, HIV infections declined by 18 percent among white MSM (from 9,000 to 7,400 infections), stabilized among black MSM (about 10,000 infections per year) and increased by 20 percent among Latino MSM (from 6,100 to 7,300 infections).
 - HIV infections among gay and bisexual men decreased among those aged 13-24 years by 18 percent (from 9,400 to 7,700 infections) and among the 35-44 age group by 26 percent (from 5,800 to 4,300 infections), but increased by 35 percent among those aged 25-34 years (from 7,200 to 9,700 infections).
 - Black men continue to represent the largest number of new HIV infections (10,100) among MSM, followed by whites (7,400) and Latinos (7,300).
- Young, black MSM (aged 13 - 24 years) – the most severely affected subpopulation of MSM – accounted for more new diagnoses in the United States (3,888 in 2015) than any other subgroup by race/ethnicity, age and sex.

Annual HIV infections are falling among gay and bisexual men aged 13-24, but rising among those aged 25-34 years



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



- If current rates persist, CDC projects that approximately one in six MSM overall are at risk of being diagnosed with HIV in their lifetime if current diagnoses rates persist -- and that black MSM (one in two) and Latino MSM (one in four) could be particularly impacted.
- Data suggest young MSM and African-American MSM are the least likely to know they are infected and to receive care and treatment.
- AIDS continues to claim the lives of too many MSM. Since the beginning of the epidemic, more than 360,000 MSM with AIDS have died.

Complex Factors Increase Risk

- **High prevalence of HIV:** The existing high prevalence of HIV among gay and bisexual men means MSM face a greater risk of being exposed to infection with each sexual encounter, especially as they get older. For young black MSM, partnering with older black men (among whom HIV prevalence is high) may also lead to increased risk.
- **Lack of knowledge of HIV status:** Studies show that people who know they are infected take steps to protect their partners. Yet many MSM are unaware of their status and may unknowingly transmit the virus to others. Additionally, some MSM may make false assumptions or have inaccurate information about their partner's HIV status. It is critical to ensure that sexually active MSM get tested for HIV at least annually, or more frequently as needed.
- **Social discrimination and cultural issues:** For some MSM – especially gay and bisexual men of color – social and economic factors, including homophobia, stigma, and lack of access to health care may increase risk behaviors or be a barrier to receiving HIV prevention services.
- **Substance abuse:** Some MSM use alcohol and illegal drugs, contributing to increased risk for HIV infection and other STDs. Substance use can increase the risk for HIV transmission through risky sexual behaviors while under the influence and through sharing needles or other injection equipment.

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.