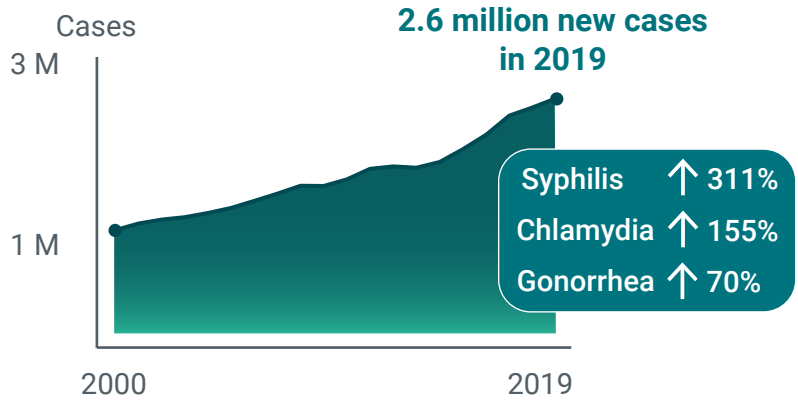
STI FACT SHEET

Reversing the Rise in STIs: Integrating Services to Address the Syndemic of STIs, HIV, Substance Use, and Viral Hepatitis

Reported cases of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) have increased dramatically in recent years. HIV, substance use, and viral hepatitis affect similar populations as STIs and each of these health concerns directly affects the others. A holistic, whole-of-society approach, including addressing social and economic barriers, is required to improve this syndemic and America's health.

STI Overview

Chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis cases have been increasing for years.

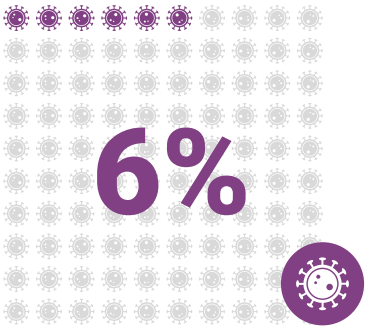


People most affected by STIs include:

- Adolescents and people aged 15-24 years
- Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men
- Pregnant people
- People from some racial and ethnic minority groups

STIs & HIV

STIs like chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis increase the chance of getting HIV. STIs also increase the chance of transmitting HIV to others.



of sexually acquired HIV infections are attributed to chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis.

New HIV infections attributed to STIs are costly.

In 2018, the lifetime medical costs for 1,896 new HIV infections attributed to chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis totaled:

$800 MILLION

= $100 Million

STIs & Substance Use

Use of opioids and other substances has been linked to increasing STIs and outbreaks of infectious diseases.

3x
More Likely

Young adults who used an illicit drug* in the past year were **3 times** more likely to get an STI.

*Illicit drug includes cocaine, hallucinogens, heroin, inhalers, methamphetamine, and pain relievers, sedatives, stimulants, and tranquilizers not prescribed by a doctor.

STIs & Viral Hepatitis

4 in 10 **acute hepatitis B cases** in the United States are estimated to result from **sexual transmission**.

Hepatitis B is preventable with a vaccination series that can be started and completed during STI care visits.

Holistic, Coordinated Care Is Critical for Addressing These Overlapping Epidemics

A "no-wrong-door" approach – providing or connecting a person to all the services that meet their needs wherever they seek care – is crucial.

The first step in implementing this approach is **increasing access to quality healthcare settings.** STD clinics are important spaces for people who are uninsured, need flexible appointments, need low- or no-cost services, or are looking for expert and confidential services.

We must reduce the effect of social and economic conditions that can influence health outcomes - called social determinants of health - which have been documented as key contributors to negative health outcomes, including STI transmission. Strategies to reduce these conditions can include:

- **Promoting prevention and care in related systems,** including housing, education, and the justice system.
- **Providing patients with resources,** including housing, food, transportation, and employment.
- **Integrating existing programs,** such as syringe services, substance use disorder treatment programs, and HIV testing and pre-exposure prophylaxis programs in STD clinics.
- **Identifying "outside-the-box" opportunities for collaboration and integration.** New solutions could include developing partnerships with pharmacies and retail health clinics or modernizing and streamlining data systems.