Key features of syphilis in the U.S. in 2004

Syphilis is a preventable and curable sexually transmitted disease (STD). Syphilis disproportionately affects a small percentage of the population and research shows that these are often isolated groups involved in high-risk activities such as illicit drug use, exchanging sex for money or drugs, unprotected sexual intercourse and having multiple sex partners.

- U.S. primary and secondary (P&S) syphilis rate in 2004 was 2.7 cases/100,000 population (7,980 cases).
- U.S. congenital syphilis rate was 8.8 cases/100,000 live births (353 cases).
- Half of U.S. P&S cases in 2004 were in 20 counties, less than 1% of 3,140 counties.

Key features of syphilis in Baltimore (City), MD in 2004

Primary and secondary syphilis cases, rates and rank

- Baltimore (City), MD’s 209 cases ranked 8 among 3,140 U.S. counties.
- Baltimore (City), MD’s rate of 33.2 cases/100,000 population ranked 7 among 3,140 U.S. counties.
- Baltimore (City), MD’s rate was 12.3 times the U.S. rate of 2.7 cases/100,000 population.

Male-female ratios (primary and secondary syphilis)

- In Baltimore (City), MD 154 (74%) cases in 2004 were among males, compared to 83% nationally. The rate among males (52.6/100,000) was 11.2 times that of the U.S. male rate (4.7/100,000).
- In Baltimore (City), MD 55 (26%) cases were among females, compared to 16% nationally. The rate among females (16.4/100,000) was 20.5 times that of the U.S. female rate (0.8/100,000).
- The ratio of male to female rates in Baltimore (City), MD was 3.2:1.0, lower than than the U.S. ratio of 5.3:1.0.

Racial disparities (primary and secondary syphilis)

- In Baltimore (City), MD in 2004, the racial distribution of the 209 cases was: White = 44; Black = 140; Hispanics = 11; Asian = 1; American Indian = 0. The race-adjusted rates (per 100,000 population) were: White = 24.2; Black = 36.4; Hispanics = 103.3; Asian = 9.1; American Indian = 0.0.
- 22.5% of cases were among Whites, compared to 40% nationally.
- 71.3% of cases were among Blacks, compared to 41% nationally. The rate among Blacks (36.4) was 1.5 times that of Whites (24.2).
- 5.7% of cases were among Hispanics, compared to 16% nationally. The rate among Hispanics (103.3) was 4.3 times that of Whites (24.2).
- 0.5% cases were among Asians, compared to 2% nationally. The rate among Asians (9.1) was 0.4 times that of Whites (24.2).
- 0.0% cases were among American Indians, compared to 1% nationally. The rate among American Indians (0.0) was 0.0 times that of Whites (24.2).

Congenital Syphilis

Syphilis can be transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy causing stillbirths or congenital syphilis that may result in lifelong health problems.

- Baltimore (City), MD had 9 congenital syphilis cases born in 2004.
- The congenital syphilis rate in the city was 93.3 cases/100,000 live births.
- The congenital syphilis rate in Baltimore (City), MD was 10.6 times the U.S. rate of 8.8/100,000.