

HIV among Women

United States

From 2008 through 2011, the number of diagnoses of HIV infection among adult women (age 13+) in the U.S. decreased. In 2011, 21% (N=10,257) of all new HIV infections diagnosed in the U.S. were women.

The proportion of HIV infection and AIDS cases among adult females diagnosed in the U.S. by race/ethnicity, 2011

Race/Ethnicity	HIV infection		AIDS	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
White	1,776	17%	1,202	15%
Black	6,595	64%	5,311	67%
Hispanic	1,530	15%	1,131	14%
American Indian	51	0%	38	0%
Asian	161	2%	93	1%
Multiple Races	144	1%	176	2%

Why Focus on Women?

Like other affected populations, women face a number of risk factors that may contribute to their risk for HIV infection.

- Over a quarter of a million (an estimated 279,100) were living with HIV at the end of 2009.
- Most women (greater than 80%) are infected with HIV through heterosexual sex. Some women become infected because they may be unaware of a male partner's risk factors for HIV infection or have a lack of HIV knowledge and lower perception of risk. Relationship dynamics also play a role. For example, some women may not insist on condom use because they fear that their partner will physically abuse or leave them.
- Both unprotected vaginal and anal sex pose a risk for HIV transmission. Unprotected anal sex presents an even greater risk for HIV transmission for women than unprotected vaginal sex.
- Women who have experienced sexual abuse may be more likely than women with no abuse history to use drugs as a coping mechanism, have difficulty refusing unwanted sex, exchange sex for drugs, or engage in high-risk sexual activities.
- Injection drug and other substance use increase HIV risk through sharing injection equipment contaminated with HIV or engaging in high-risk behaviors, such as unprotected sex, when under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- The presence of some sexually transmitted diseases greatly increases the likelihood of acquiring or transmitting HIV. Rates of gonorrhea and syphilis are higher among women of color than among white women.
- Socioeconomic issues associated with poverty, including limited access to high-quality health care; the exchange of sex for drugs, money, or to meet other needs; and higher levels of substance use can directly or indirectly increase HIV risk factors.

Florida

In Florida, HIV infection among adult women (ages 13+) accounted for only 11% of reported cases in 1987. That figure steadily rose to 30% in 2004, but then decreased, down to 23% in 2013.

As per Florida's adult population estimates for 2013, 59% of adult women were white, 15% were black, 22% were Hispanic and 4% were other races. In 2013, 1,374 HIV infection and 943 AIDS cases were reported among women. Blacks were over-represented, accounting for 70% of the AIDS cases and 66% of the HIV infection cases reported among women.

The proportion of HIV infection and AIDS cases among adult females reported in Florida by race/ethnicity, 2013

Race/Ethnicity	HIV infection		AIDS	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
White	231	17%	132	14%
Black	901	66%	654	69%
Hispanic	224	16%	132	14%
American Indian	3	0%	3	0%
Asian	8	1%	4	0%
Multiple Races	7	1%	18	2%

Women are most likely to be infected through high risk heterosexual contact, followed by injection drug use.

The Proportion of HIV and AIDS Cases Among Adult Females Reported in Florida by Mode of Exposure, 2013

Mode of Exposure	HIV infection		AIDS	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Injection Drug Use	116	8%	109	12%
Heterosexual Contact	1,247	91%	821	87%
Other Risk	11	1%	13	1%

Among adult women living with HIV disease through 2012, the majority (68%) were aged 40 and older. Also in 2012, 1 in 287 adult women were living in Florida with HIV disease, including 1 in 61 blacks, 1 in 466 Hispanics, 1 in 1,092 whites and 1 in 622 other races.

In 2012, HIV was the 5th leading cause of death among women between the ages of 25-44. By race/ethnicity for the same age group, HIV was the 9th leading cause among white females, the 2nd leading cause among black females (down from number 1 for the first time ever since 1988) and the 9th leading cause among Hispanic females.

According to both national and Florida data, the survival time from AIDS diagnosis to death is significantly shorter for females than males. Of the AIDS cases that died in Florida from 2007-2012, females had a median survival of 57 months from time of diagnosis to death compared with males who had 70 months.

Data sources:

- Florida data: FL Department of Health, Bureau of Communicable Disease, HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis Section
- For more Florida data, go to <http://floridaaids.org/>, then surveillance, then slide shows to find the slide set on women
- U.S. data: HIV Surveillance Report, 2011 (most recent available) Vol. 23 (HIV data for all 50 states) <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/index.htm>
- For national facts, go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/resources/factsheets/index.htm> or <http://www.kff.org/hivaids/>

