

HIV Testing Trends Among Hispanics in Florida

According to the 2008 Census estimates, Hispanics represent 21% of Florida's overall population. During that same year, Hispanics comprised 24.5% of the HIV tests conducted in Florida's publicly funded testing facilities and 19.9% of the positive tests. By comparison in the 2000 Census, Hispanics accounted for 16.8% of the population, 14.5% of HIV tests and 13.0% of the positive tests. Between the census taken in 2000 and the most recent estimate in 2008, Florida's Hispanic population increased by 43.3% while HIV testing among Hispanics increased 156.0% and their proportion of positive tests increased by 67.1%. Our last report from October 2005 on HIV testing trends among Hispanics looked at the years 2002 through 2004. This report covers 2004 through 2008.

Figure 1. Hispanic HIV Testing and Positivity Rates by Sex, Florida, 2004 - 2008

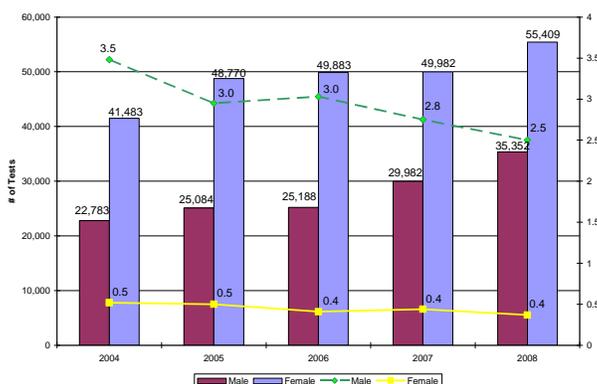


Figure 1 shows testing numbers and positivity rates by sex. Statewide, testing numbers have increased for both men and women while the positivity rate among men has decreased and the positivity rate among women was level. Hispanic men had a positivity rate almost 7 times higher than that for Hispanic women.

Figure 2 shows the positivity rates for selected self-reported risk behaviors among Hispanics. Men who have sex with men (MSM) including MSM who are also injection drug users (MSM/IDU)

had the highest positivity rate (7.5%) in 2008. IDUs also remain a high-risk group although their positivity rates have remained fairly stable the past three years following a sharp decline from 2004 to 2006. While Hispanic heterosexuals comprise the highest proportion of tests in 2008 (70.9%), that risk group consistently has the lowest positivity rate. Also noteworthy is that in the past 3 years those who had an STD diagnosis were below the overall positivity rate for Hispanics. Those who exchange sex for drugs or money have remained near the overall positivity rate, with some years above and some years below.

Figure 2. Positivity Rates by Self-Disclosed Risk Behaviors Among Hispanics, Florida, 2004 - 2008

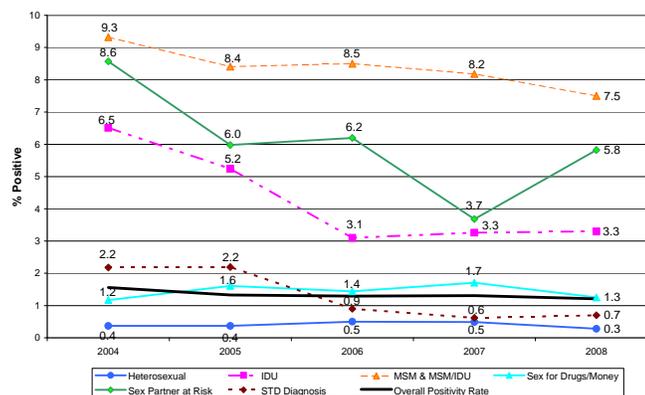


Figure 3A shows the proportion of HIV tests and **Figure 3B** shows the proportion of positive HIV tests by age group in 2008. Each age group follows the statewide trend of increased testing over time with decreasing positivity rates (data not shown).

Figure 3A. Distribution of HIV Tests by Age Group Among Hispanics, Florida 2008 (N=91,371)

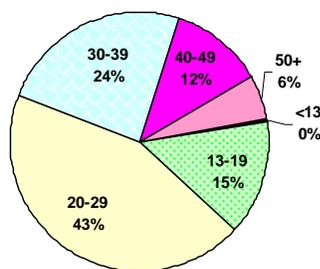
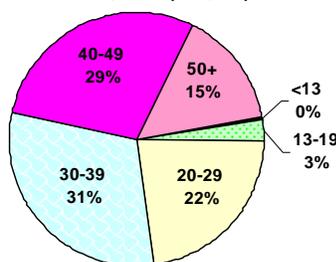


Figure 3B. Distribution of HIV Positive Tests by Age Group Among Hispanics, Florida, 2008 (N=1,103)



While the 20-29 age group had the most tests (43%), they accounted for just 22% of the positives. Conversely, the 50+ age group accounted for just 6% of tests and 15% of positives. The 40-49 age group was disproportionately impacted with 12% of tests and 29% of the positives. The 30-39 year olds accounted for 24% of the tests and 31% of the positives. Hispanic youth age 19 and under comprised 15% of tests and only 3% of the positive test results.

Overall, testing trends among Hispanics have increased over time. But with a fast growing population, continued efforts need to be made to reach Hispanics with culturally appropriate prevention messages and interventions as well as continued counseling and testing outreach.