

Sexually transmitted infections in Victoria 2000

The Department of Health Victoria collates data on sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in Victoria. Detailed demographic and socio-behavioural data is collected on diagnoses of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), gonorrhoea, chlamydia and syphilis.

HIV/AIDS

Selected statistics from 2000 include:

- By the end of 2000, there were 4,412 cases of HIV infection, which accounts for 21 per cent of all reported HIV cases in Australia.
- In 2000, there were 198 new notifications of HIV, comprising 177 males, 20 females and one transgender individual.
- The median age was 34 years for males and 30 years for females.
- Male to male sexual contact was cited as the main exposure for 72 per cent of males.
- Heterosexual exposure accounted for eight per cent of infections in males.
- Injecting drug use and homosexual contact accounted for four per cent of infections in males.
- Injecting drug use alone accounted for six per cent of infections in males.
- Heterosexual contact accounted for 35 per cent of infections in females.
- Sixty per cent of notifications in females were in women originating from high prevalence countries.
- Injecting drug use accounted for the remaining infection in females.
- There has been a dramatic decrease in AIDS diagnoses since 1994, with 60 new AIDS diagnoses in 2000.
- The decline in AIDS diagnoses may be due to the increased use of highly active anti-retroviral therapies (HAART), which became widely available in Australia during 1996.

Gonorrhoea

Selected statistics from 2000 include:

- There were 742 notifications of gonorrhoea, an increase of six per cent from 1999.
- Males accounted for 95 per cent of all infections.
- Three quarters of male cases were aged 20 to 39 years.
- The most common site of isolation for men was the urethra.
- The most common site of isolation for women was the cervix.
- Of all male cases for whom sexual orientation was reported, 69 per cent were homosexual or bisexual.
- All but one of the female cases were reported to be heterosexual.
- The majority of male cases reported acquiring their infection from a casual sexual partner.
- The majority of infections of women were attributed to a regular sexual partner.

Chlamydia

Selected statistics from 2000 include:

- There was a further increase in the number of chlamydia cases notified: a total of 3,294 cases compared with 2,950 in 1999.
- The number of chlamydia notifications has more than doubled since the early 1990s and it is now the most commonly reported sexually transmissible infection.
- This may be partly due to enhanced surveillance activities, the use of improved testing methods, increased awareness, increased testing, and possibly increased prevalence in the community.
- The majority of infections are in women and men aged between 20 and 29 years.

- Sixteen per cent of infections were amongst males and females aged between 15 and 19 years.
- Females accounted for 59 per cent of infections.
- Additional demographic and behavioural information was available for about one third of notifications received during 2000. Of these, 79 per cent of males and 99 per cent of females identified as heterosexual, and 18 per cent of males reported to be homosexual.
- Males were more likely to present with symptoms (69 per cent compared with 39 per cent amongst females).

Syphilis

Selected statistics from 2000 include:

- There were 235 new notifications of syphilis.
- Only seven notifications represented the infectious stage of the disease.
- Twenty-six per cent of notifications were from individuals with past treated infection.
- No cases of congenital syphilis were notified in 2000.

Where to get help

- Your doctor
- Family planning clinic
- Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit, Department of Health Victoria Tel. (03) 9096 0000

Things to remember

- The Department of Health Victoria collates data on sexually transmissible infections (STIs) in Victoria.
- Detailed demographic and socio-behavioural data is collected on diagnoses of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), gonorrhoea, chlamydia and syphilis.

This page has been produced in consultation with, and approved by:

Department of Health - Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit

This Better Health Channel fact sheet has passed through a rigorous approval process. The information provided was accurate at the time of publication and is not intended to take the place of medical advice. Please seek advice from a qualified health care professional.

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