

Chlamydia rates decline for first time since reporting on the disease began

By ACSH Staff — December 29, 2014



^[1]The national rate of chlamydia infections has decreased for the first

time since reporting on the disease began in 1994, says the CDC's annual report, [Sexually Transmitted Diseases Surveillance](#). ^[2] The report summarizes data on chlamydia, syphilis, and gonorrhea for 2013.

There were just over 1.4 million cases of *Chlamydia trachomatis* infection, for a rate of 446.6 cases per 100,000 population. This is a 1.5 percent decrease from 2012 when 1.42 million cases of chlamydial infections were reported, for a rate of 456.7 cases per 100,000 people. The rate of chlamydia among women was 623.1 cases per 100,000 people more than double that of men, which was 262.6 cases per 100,000. The rate of chlamydia among blacks was over 6 times that of whites, and almost four times greater among American Indians/Alaska Natives than whites.

In other findings, there were about 333,000 cases of gonorrhea reported, which also decreased slightly since 2012. About 17,000 cases of syphilis were reported unfortunately, a 10 percent increase between 2012 and 2013.

The authors note, Many cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis continue to go undiagnosed and unreported, and data on several additional STDs such as HPV, herpes simplex virus and trichomoniasis are not routinely reported to CDC. As a result, the annual surveillance report captures only a fraction of the true burden of STDs in America.

Indeed, because many infections go undiagnosed, the actual number of sexually transmitted infections is likely much higher than what is reported by the CDC. And as [we ve reported in the past](#) [3], not enough people get screened for STDs such as chlamydia. When diagnosed early enough, chlamydia is curable. Untreated chlamydia can lead to severe complications such as chronic pain and infertility. And because it often has no symptoms, the CDC recommends annual screening for sexually active women. While men are less likely to develop complications, infected men can still easily transmit the disease. Healthcare providers should strongly encourage STD screening for those who are sexually active.

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[1] <http://www.freeimages.com/browse.phtml?f=download&id=1314902&redirect=photo>

[2] <http://www.cdc.gov/std/stats13/natoverview.htm>

[3] <http://acsh.org/2012/03/chlamydia-can-cured-need-get-tested-first/>