

### The HIV/AIDS Epidemic in the United States

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The first cases of what would later become known as AIDS were reported in the United States in June of 1981.<sup>1</sup> Since that time, more than 1.5 million people in the U.S. have been infected with HIV, including more than 500,000 who have already died.<sup>2</sup> The response to the U.S. epidemic has yielded numerous successes, but challenges remain:

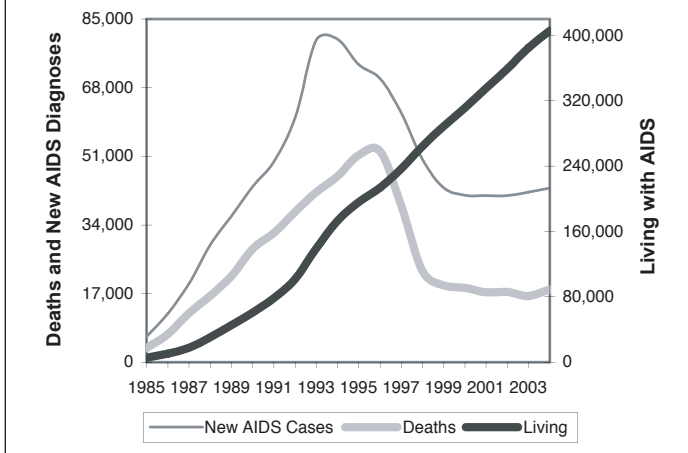
- Annual HIV incidence is down from its peak of more than 150,000 in the 1980s to approximately 40,000 new infections per year today.<sup>3,4</sup> However, it has remained at this level for over a decade and recent analyses suggest a potential rise among some populations.<sup>5</sup>
- HIV testing is important for both prevention and treatment efforts and new technologies, such as rapid testing, are now available. Yet approximately 24-27% of those infected with HIV do not know it.<sup>6</sup>
- Advances in HIV/AIDS treatment have substantially reduced AIDS-related morbidity and mortality and extended the lives of many. New treatments, however, are not a cure and do not benefit all people with HIV. An estimated 42% to 59% of people living with HIV/AIDS are not in regular HIV care.<sup>7</sup>
- The epidemic has had a disproportionate impact on some populations, particularly minorities.

33 areas with integrated HIV and AIDS surveillance since at least 1999, 32,048 HIV/AIDS cases were diagnosed in 2003 (these states represent 43% of reported AIDS cases).<sup>2</sup>

#### Key Trends and Current Cases

- AIDS cases have been reported in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. dependencies, possessions, and associated nations. Ten states account for 71% of all reported cases.<sup>2</sup> The ranking of states by cumulative reported cases varies from the ranking by AIDS case rate<sup>2</sup> (Figure 2).
- Reported AIDS cases have been concentrated primarily in large U.S. metropolitan areas (82% in 2003 and 84% during 1981-2003).<sup>2</sup> Ten U.S. metropolitan areas account for 42% of all reported cases.<sup>2</sup>
- By region, the Northeast had the highest AIDS case rate per 100,000 in 2003 (21.1 per 100,000), followed by the South (18.8), West (10.0), and Midwest (6.9).<sup>2,9</sup> The South had the greatest number of people estimated to be living with AIDS, deaths among persons with AIDS, and AIDS diagnoses in 2003, followed by the Northeast, West, and Midwest.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 1: Estimated New AIDS Cases, Deaths Among Persons with AIDS & People Living with AIDS, 1985–2003<sup>2,8</sup>**



#### Snapshot of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic

- Almost 930,000 cases of AIDS were diagnosed in the U.S. through 2003, including 43,171 cases diagnosed in 2003 alone.<sup>2</sup> This represents a 4.6% increase over AIDS cases diagnosed in 2002.<sup>2</sup>
- An estimated 524,060 deaths among people with AIDS occurred through 2003, including 18,017 in 2003.<sup>2</sup>
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 1,039,000–1,185,000 people were living with HIV or AIDS in the U.S. in 2003.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2003, 405,926 people were estimated to be living with AIDS, the most advanced stage of HIV disease.<sup>2</sup>
- All states now report HIV cases (in addition to AIDS cases), which will provide a fuller picture of the epidemic over time. Among the

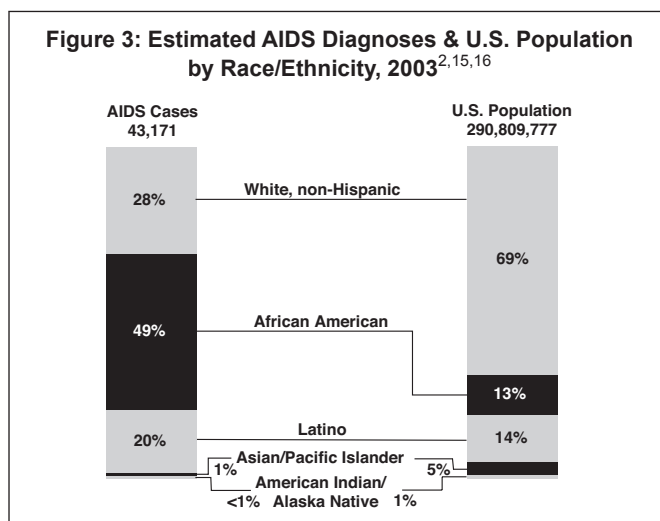
**Figure 2: Cumulative Reported AIDS Cases (1981–2003) & AIDS Case Rate Per 100,000 Population (2003) Top Ten States<sup>2</sup>**

Top 10 States/ Areas	AIDS Cases (1981–2003)	Top 10 States/ Areas	AIDS Case Rate (2003)
New York	162,446	District of Columbia	170.6
California	133,292	New York	34.8
Florida	94,725	Virgin Islands	31.2
Texas	62,983	Maryland	28.5
New Jersey	46,703	Puerto Rico	27.5
Illinois	30,139	Florida	27.4
Pennsylvania	29,988	Delaware	26.1
Puerto Rico	28,301	Louisiana	23.2
Georgia	27,915	Georgia	22.0
Maryland	26,918	Connecticut	21.1
Subtotal	643,410	Subtotal	N/A
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>902,223</b>	<b>U.S. Case Rate</b>	<b>15.2</b>

- HIV-related mortality rates rose steadily through the 1980's, peaking in 1995.<sup>10</sup> Between 1995 and 2002, the age-adjusted HIV death rate declined by 70%, due largely to the introduction of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART).<sup>11,12</sup> In 2001, HIV was the 5th leading cause of death among those ages 25-44, down from #1 in 1995.<sup>13,14</sup> However, HIV mortality declines have slowed and may be stabilizing; between 2001 and 2002, HIV death rates declined by 2%.<sup>12</sup>
- Declines in AIDS diagnoses due to HAART also appear to have ended, as AIDS diagnoses increased for the second year in a row between 2002 and 2003 (a 4.6% increase).<sup>2</sup>
- HIV transmission patterns have shifted over time. Heterosexual transmission accounts for a growing proportion of newly diagnosed AIDS cases, rising from 3% in 1985 to 31% in 2003. Over that same period, the share of new AIDS diagnoses due to sex between men fell from 65% to 42%. The share of AIDS diagnoses due to injection drug use was 19% in 1985, peaking at 31% in 1993, and was 22% in 2003.<sup>2,8</sup>

### Impact on Racial and Ethnic Minority Americans

- Racial and ethnic minorities have been disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS since the beginning of the epidemic, and minority Americans now represent the majority of new AIDS cases (71%) and of those estimated to be living with AIDS (64%) in 2003.<sup>2</sup>
- African Americans and Latinos account for a disproportionate share of new AIDS diagnoses (Figure 3)<sup>2,15</sup> and of new HIV/AIDS diagnoses in the 33 integrated surveillance states.<sup>2</sup>
- Almost half (47%) of all those living with HIV/AIDS in the U.S. are African Americans.<sup>6</sup>
- African Americans have the highest AIDS case rates of any racial/ethnic group, followed by Latinos, American Indian/Alaska Natives, whites, and Asian/Pacific Islanders.<sup>2</sup> The AIDS case rate per 100,000 population for African Americans was 9.5 times that of whites in 2003.<sup>2</sup>



- African Americans accounted for 55% of deaths due to HIV in 2002; Latinos accounted for 13%.<sup>12</sup>
- HIV was the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death among African Americans between the ages of 25 and 34 in 2001, and the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for Latinos and whites in this age group. It ranks higher for some subpopulations – for example, HIV was the #1 cause of death for African American women ages 24-34 in 2001.<sup>17</sup>
- Survival after an AIDS diagnosis is lower among African-Americans than other racial/ethnic groups.<sup>2</sup>

### Impact on Women and Young People

- Women account for a growing proportion of new AIDS diagnoses, rising from 8% in 1985 to 27% in 2003.<sup>2,8</sup>
- Women of color are particularly affected. African American women account for 67% of estimated new AIDS diagnoses among women in 2003; Latinas account for 16%.<sup>2,18</sup>
- Young adults and teens continue to be at risk. At least half of all new HIV infections are estimated to be among those under the age of 25.<sup>19</sup> Most young people are infected through sex.<sup>20</sup>
- Among youth, teen girls and minorities have been particularly affected. In 2002, teen girls represented about half (51%) of HIV cases reported among 13-19 year olds.<sup>21</sup> Young African Americans represented 65% of AIDS cases reported among 13-19 years olds in 2002; Latino teens represented 20%.<sup>20</sup>
- Perinatal HIV transmission has declined significantly in the U.S., largely due to antiretroviral treatment — AIDS diagnoses attributable to perinatal transmission declined by more than 90% between 1992 and 2003.<sup>2,22</sup> The majority of cases that still occur are among African-Americans.<sup>2</sup>

### Impact on Men Who Have Sex with Men

- Despite declines in HIV infection rates among men who have sex with men (MSM) since the early years of the epidemic, they continue to be at high risk for infection, accounting for an estimated

57% of AIDS diagnoses among men in 2003.<sup>2</sup> Studies indicate that risk behavior continues among MSM and that they are at significantly greater risk for HIV infection than other groups in the U.S.<sup>23,24</sup>

- Younger MSM and MSM of color are at particularly high risk. CDC studies have found high HIV incidence and prevalence among MSM in some cities, particularly among African American and Latino MSM, and low levels of awareness of infection status among those with HIV.<sup>23</sup>

### The U.S. Government Response

- In FY 2005, U.S. federal funding for HIV/AIDS is estimated to total \$19.7 billion. Of this, 59% will go to care, 15% to research, 9% to cash and housing assistance, 4% to prevention, and 12% to combat the international epidemic.<sup>25</sup>
- Key programs that provide health insurance coverage, care, and support to people with HIV/AIDS in the U.S. include Medicaid, Medicare, and the Ryan White CARE Act.<sup>25</sup>
- A variety of federally and state-supported prevention services are provided by state and local health departments and community organizations. The CDC's new Advancing HIV Prevention Initiative is aimed at reducing barriers to early diagnosis of HIV infection and increasing access to quality medical care, treatment, and ongoing prevention services.<sup>4</sup>

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