



Key features of syphilis in the U.S. in 2003

Syphilis is a preventable and curable sexually transmitted disease (STD). Syphilis disproportionately affects a small percentage of the population and research shows that these are often isolated groups involved in high-risk activities such as illicit drug use, exchanging sex for money or drugs, unprotected sexual intercourse and having multiple sex partners.

- U.S. primary and secondary (P&S) syphilis rate in 2003 was 2.5 cases/100,000 population (7,177 cases).
- U.S. congenital syphilis rate was 10.3 cases/100,000 live births (413 cases).
- Half of U.S. P&S cases in 2003 were in 19 counties, less than 1% of 3,140 counties.

Key features of syphilis in Alabama in 2003

Primary and secondary syphilis cases, rates and rank

- Alabama's 114 cases ranked 18 among 50 states, District of Columbia and 3 territories.
- Alabama's rate of 2.5 cases/100,000 population ranked 16 among 50 states, District of Columbia and 3 territories.
- Alabama's rate was 1 times the U.S. rate of 2.5 cases/100,000 population.

Male-female ratios (primary and secondary syphilis)

- In Alabama, 65 (57%) cases in 2003 were among males, compared to 83% nationally. The rate among males (3/100,000) was 0.7 times that of the U.S. male rate (4.2/100,000).
- In Alabama, 49 (43%) cases were among females, compared to 17% nationally. The rate among females (2.1/100,000) was 2.6 times that of the U.S. female rate (0.8/100,000).
- The ratio of male to female rates in Alabama was 1.4:1.0, lower than than the U.S. ratio of 4.9:1.0.

Racial disparities (primary and secondary syphilis)

- In Alabama in 2003, the racial distribution of the 114 cases was: White = 23; Black = 88; Hispanics = 2; Asian = 1; American Indian = 0. The race adjusted rates (per 100,000 population) were: White = 0.7; Black = 7.4; Hispanics = 2.2; Asian = 2.4; American Indian = 0.0.
- 20.2% of cases were among Whites, compared to 42% nationally.
- 77.2% of cases were among Blacks, compared to 39% nationally. The rate among Blacks (7.4) was 10.6 times that of Whites (0.7).
- 1.8% of cases were among Hispanics, compared to 16% nationally. The rate among Hispanics (2.2) was 3.1 times that of Whites (0.7).
- 0.9% of cases were among Asians, compared to 2% nationally. The rate among Asians (2.4) was 3.4 times that of Whites (0.7).
- 0.0% of cases were among American Indians, compared to 1% nationally. The rate among American Indians (0.0) was 0.0 times that of Whites (0.7).

Congenital Syphilis

Syphilis can be transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy causing stillbirths or congenital syphilis that may result in lifelong health problems.

- Alabama had 3 congenital syphilis cases born in 2003.
- The congenital syphilis rate in the state was 5.1 cases/100,000 live births.
- The congenital syphilis rate in Alabama was 0.5 times the U.S. rate of 10.3/100,000 live births.

