



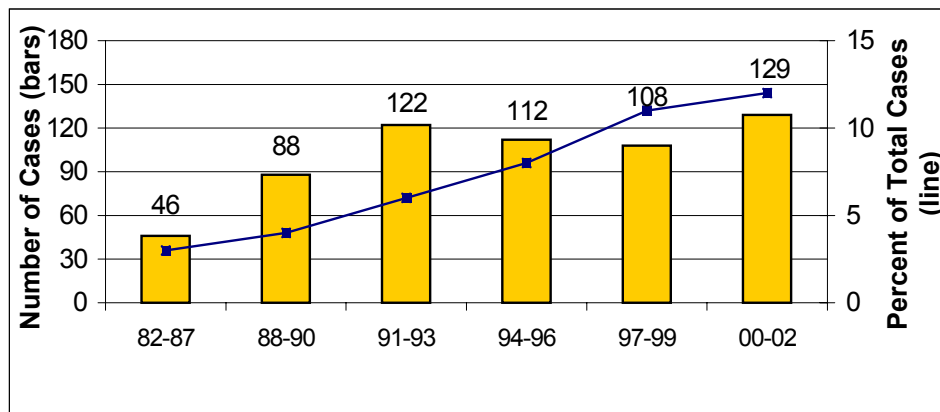
HIV/AIDS in Women

SUMMARY: In King County, women represent less than 10% of the total HIV/AIDS cases. However, the proportion of AIDS cases among women and the number of women living with HIV infection have increased in recent years, and this trend is expected to continue. Women with HIV/AIDS tend to be younger than men, most acquire HIV through sexual contact with HIV-infected men, and women of color are disproportionately affected.

STATUS AND TRENDS IN HIV/AIDS CASES:

- Women aged 13 and over represent 9% (451) of the total 5,115 King County residents reported living with HIV/AIDS through December 2002.
- The proportion of persons with HIV/AIDS who are adolescent and adult women was higher in Washington State (10%) and nationally (18%) at the end of 2002.
- The number of HIV/AIDS cases diagnosed in King County women continues to increase, as shown in Figure 1. By three-year period, cases in women have increased with about 30 women diagnosed with HIV annually 1988-1990, and a projected 50 per year in 2000-2002.
- Whereas case numbers among women have increased over time, case numbers among men have declined recently. As a result, the percent of King County HIV/AIDS cases occurring in women has increased over time, as shown in Figure 1, with women climbing from 3% of cases in 1982-87 to 12% of cases diagnosed in 2000-02.

Figure 1: Number & Percent of HIV/AIDS Cases in King County Women, 1982-2002*



*Recent years not adjusted for reporting delay; case data reported as of 12/02.

- In King County, women tend to be diagnosed with HIV at an earlier age than men -- 37% of King County women with HIV/AIDS were 20-29 years old at their diagnosis of HIV infection compared to 26% of men. Also, 6% of women were aged 13-19 at HIV diagnosis compared to 1% of men.
- The majority (64%) of women living with HIV/AIDS in King County acquired HIV through heterosexual contact, 32% through use of injection drugs, and 4% by blood transfusion. These percentages are calculated after adjusting for the 24% of all cases among females that are reported without known risk.
- In King County in recent years compared to white women, the actual prevalence rate is substantially higher among African Americans (13 times), Native American & Alaskan Natives (9 times) and Hispanic women (3 times). The rate is about 1/3 as high among Asian & Pacific Islander women.

**Table 1: Prevalence Rates per 100,000
by Race Among King Co. Women Living with HIV/AIDS, 2002***

Race/ethnicity	Number of HIV/AIDS cases*	Percent of cases in women	Rate per 100,000 women
White, non-Hispanic	194	42%	30
Black, non-Hispanic	199	43%	446
Hispanic	36	8%	83
Asian/Pacific Islander	13	3%	13
Native American/AK Native	22	2%	307

*Case diagnosed and reported through 12/31/2002 but not adjusted for reporting delay.

POPULATION SIZES:

- The estimated number of King County women who are at-risk for HIV because they are drug injectors or sex partners of drug injectors is 9,000-15,000.
- The estimated number of HIV positive adult or adolescent women in King County is approximately 750. This estimate includes HIV-infected women who have not been diagnosed and a smaller number of women who have tested HIV positive but who have not been reported.

HIV PREVALENCE:

- Based on the above estimate and a 2000 Census of 743,804 women, we estimate that 0.1% of all women age 13 and over are infected. The rate is higher among African American, Hispanic, and Native American women (see Table 1).
- HIV surveys in King County have been conducted to directly measure HIV prevalence (percent of people currently infected) among selected populations, as shown below. None of these surveys adequately measures the true prevalence of HIV among all women in King County.

Table 2: Surveys Measuring HIV Prevalence among King County Women

Survey	Women No. tested	%HIV +	Survey	Women No. tested	%HIV +
Childbearing Women 1989-1995	123,268	0.04%	PH-SKC HIV Counseling 1988-6/2000	52,900	0.4%
STD Clinic 1988-2001	7,527	0.3%	Job Corps (WA State) 1988-1997	4,806	0.10%
Drug Treatment Centers 1988-1999	3,255	1.4%	Military Recruits (WA State) 1985-2001	25,303	<0.01%

- The prevalence of HIV among the 7,527 women tested for HIV in the unlinked (anonymous) STD Clinic survey has been less than one-half of one percent and has been stable over a 12-year study period from 1988 through 2001. Since these women were seeking care for a possible sexually-transmitted disease, women in this survey are considered to be higher risk of HIV than the general population of women.

OTHER MEASURES OF RISK:

- Monitoring other sexually or parenterally transmitted diseases can indicate risk for HIV infection. For example, gonorrhea rates in Seattle-area women declined steadily in the 1990s to a low of about 39 cases per 100,000 women in 1999. However in 2000 and 2001, gonorrhea rates increased to 51 and 66 per 100,000, respectively. As with HIV/AIDS, gonorrhea rates among African American women in King County are substantially greater than those in white women.