

Indicator: Early Syphilis rate per 100,000 population

Overview

Why is this indicator important?

Over half of the syphilis cases reported in Minnesota are among Hennepin County residents. The symptoms of syphilis emerge as a single sore (primary stage), a rash (secondary stage), and may progress to organ damage, brain or nerve problems, and possibly even death. Although treatable, syphilis continues to persist because people may fail to recognize the symptoms or attribute their condition to other causes.

How are we doing?

- In 2016 *early syphilis* (primary and secondary stages) was most commonly found in adults aged 30-34 years.
- The majority of early syphilis cases were found in men (in 2016, 147 (87%) of early syphilis cases were male). Of these male cases, 78% reported having a male sex partner (*men who have sex with men (MSM)*).
- Syphilis is reported disproportionately in minority populations; the populations with the highest rates of early syphilis were the *American Indian, Black/African American, and Hispanic* populations.

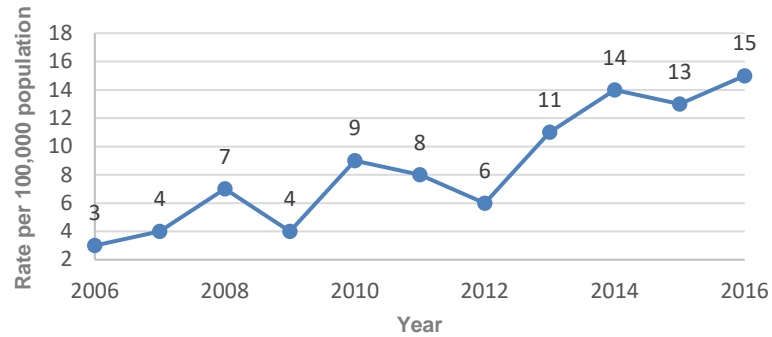
Data Source: Minnesota Department of Health – Sexually Transmitted Diseases Annual Surveillance Data, 2016

Population		Rate per 100,000	Number of Cases*
Hennepin County population overall		15	168
Race/Ethnicity	American Indian	47	5
	Asian/Pacific Islander	8	8
	Black/African American	24	41
	White	10	91
	Hispanic/Latino	24	20
Age Groups	Under 10 years	0	0
	10-14 years	0	0
	15-19 years	4	3
	20-24 years	26	22
	25-29 years	27	27
	30-34 years	40	35
	35-39 years	30	23
	40-44 years	31	24
	45-54 years	15	25
	55 years or over	3	9
Gender	Females	3	19
	Males	26	147

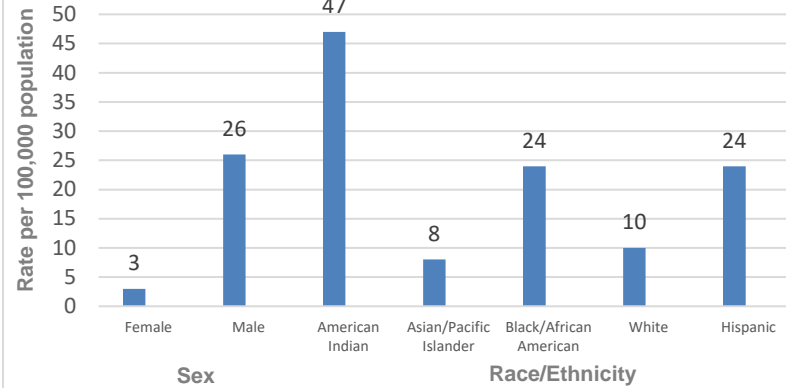
*See Technical Notes for information on the data source, limitations on reporting, and the definitions of the variables.

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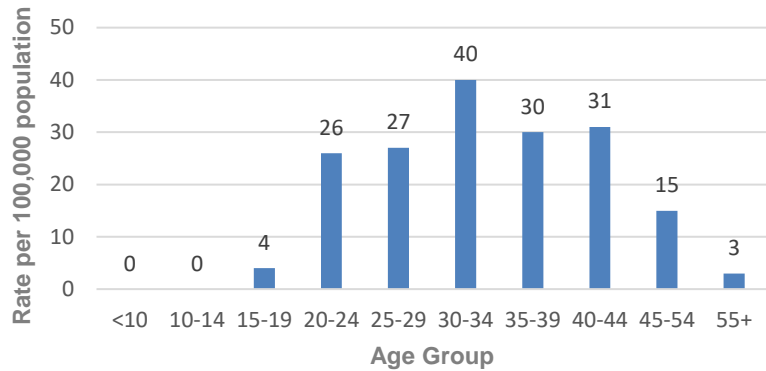
Hennepin County Early Syphilis Rate Trend Data 2006-2016



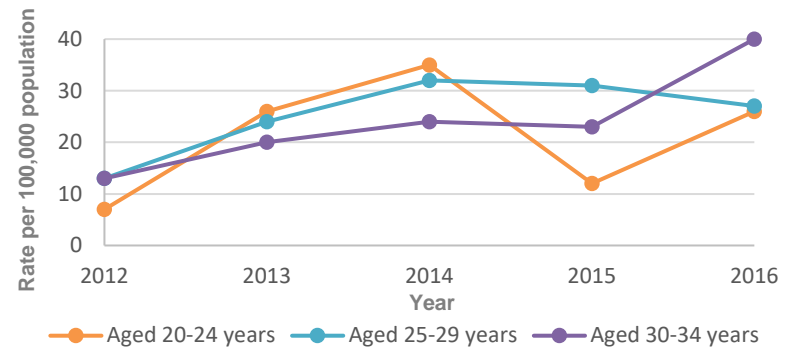
2016 Hennepin County Early Syphilis Rates by Sex and Race/Ethnicity



2016 Hennepin County Early Syphilis Rate by Age Group



Hennepin County Early Syphilis Rate Young Adults and Adults Recent Trend Data 2012-2016



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Technical Notes

Definition of indicator: Hennepin County's syphilis rate per 100,000 population includes people diagnosed within a given calendar year.

Data source: Doctors, clinics, and other health services providers are required to report all laboratory-confirmed cases of syphilis to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). Annually, the Epidemiology unit of Hennepin County's Department of Human Services and Public Health (HSPHD) receives a database with demographic information about the reported cases. The Epidemiology unit reviews these data and produces case counts and population rates using 2010 US Census Bureau population estimates, except for rates by race. Rates by race are calculated using the US Census Bureau's Bridged Population Estimates as the base for the rates per 100,000 population. This information is reported in the Hennepin County Annual STD Surveillance Report. Additional information about sexually transmitted diseases in Hennepin County can be found at <http://www.hennepin.us/epiupdates>.

Importance of this indicator: More than half of cases reported in Minnesota are among Hennepin County residents. The symptoms of syphilis emerge as a single sore (primary stage), a rash (secondary stage), and may progress to organ damage, brain or nerve problems, and possibly even death. Although treatable, syphilis continues to persist because people may fail to recognize the symptoms or attribute their condition to other causes.

Health disparities: Adults aged 30-34 years comprise the age group with the highest risk for early syphilis infections. The rate in 2016 for this group was 40 cases per 100,000 population, compared to 15 cases per 100,000 population for the Hennepin County population overall. Most cases of early syphilis are reported in males. Of these male cases, 78% reported having a male sex partner (men who have sex with men (MSM)). Syphilis is reported disproportionately in minority populations; the groups with the highest rates of early syphilis were American Indians, Black/African Americans, and Hispanics (rates were 47 cases, 24 cases, and 24 cases per 100,000 population, respectively).

Special notes on reporting rates by race/ethnicity: The rate reported for Black/African Americans combines members from both the US-born and African-born communities; rates would be expected to be different for these two sub-groups.

Special notes on location of residence: The number of cases and rates per 100,000 population reported for sexually transmitted infections differs notably by location of residence. For early syphilis, the rate for Minneapolis was 32 cases per 100,000 population compared to 15 cases per 100,000 population for Hennepin County overall. Minneapolis residents comprised 123 of the 168 cases of early syphilis reported in Hennepin County in 2016.

Special notes on reporting population rates versus numbers of cases for relatively small populations: Both the rate and the actual number of cases have been reported in the table appearing in this fact sheet. Given the actual size of a particular community or sub-group, the magnitude of the rate reported may be very high, where the actual number of cases is relatively small. Both of these statistics (rate and number of cases) should be compared and taken into consideration in determining the scope of the problem for smaller communities or sub-group.