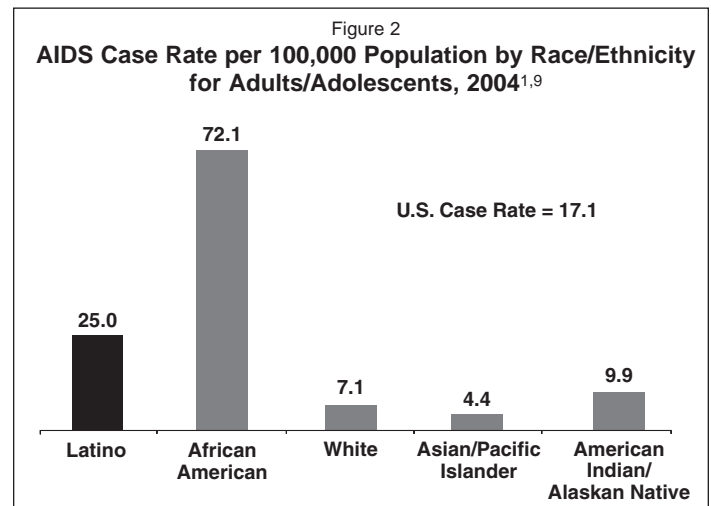
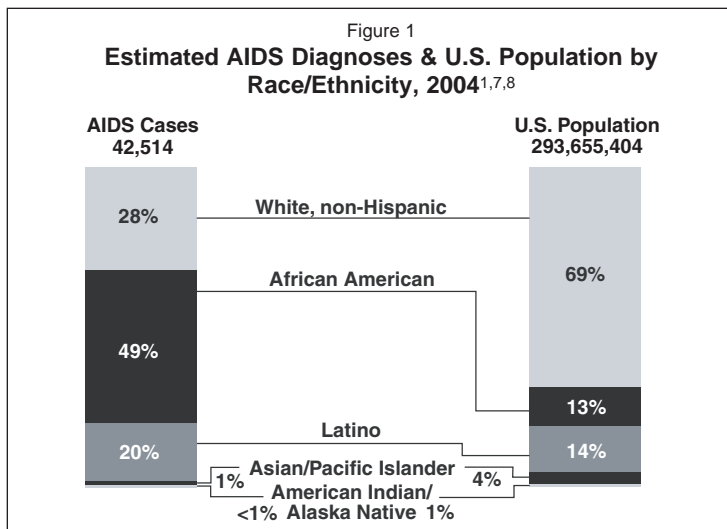


Latinos and HIV/AIDS

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Latinos in the United States continue to be affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, accounting for a greater proportion of AIDS cases than their representation in the U.S. population overall, and the second highest AIDS case rate in the nation, by race/ethnicity.¹ The epidemic has had a disproportionate impact on subgroups of Latinos including women and teens, and the impact of HIV/AIDS among Latinos varies across the country and by place of birth.^{1,2} Moreover, studies have shown that Latinos with HIV/AIDS may face additional barriers to accessing care than their white counterparts.^{3,4,5} The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that between 176,000–201,000 Latinos were living with HIV or AIDS in the United States in 2003, a figure which has likely grown since that time.⁶

- The number of Latinos living with AIDS has also increased over time, in part due to treatment advances but also to the epidemic's continued impact on Latinos. Estimated AIDS prevalence among Latinos increased by 31% between 2000 and 2004, compared to a 22% increase among whites.¹
- Deaths among Latinos with AIDS increased by 7% between 2000 and 2004 compared to a 19% decline for whites.¹



Snapshot of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic

- Although Latinos represent approximately 14% of the U.S. population,⁸ they account for 19% of the 944,306 AIDS cases diagnosed since the start of the epidemic and 20% of the 42,514 cases diagnosed in 2004 alone (Figure 1).¹
- Among the 35 states/areas with confidential name-based reporting, Latinos account for 18% of HIV/AIDS cases diagnosed in 2004.¹
- The AIDS case rate per 100,000 population among Latino adults/adolescents was the second highest of any racial/ethnic group in the U.S. in 2004—3.5 times that of whites, but about one-third that of African Americans (Figure 2).^{1,9}
- HIV was the 6th leading cause of death for Latinos ages 25–34 in 2002, the same ranking as for whites. HIV was the 3rd leading cause of death for African Americans in this age group.¹⁰

Key Trends and Current Cases

- Latinos account for a growing share of AIDS diagnoses over the course of the epidemic, rising from 15% in 1985 to 20% in 2004; in recent years, this share has remained relatively stable.^{1,11}

Women and Young People

- Among women, Latinas accounted for 15% of new AIDS cases in 2004; African American women accounted for 67% and white women 17%.^{1,9}
- Among all Latinos, Latinas represent 21% of AIDS cases diagnosed in 2004; by comparison white women represented 16% of AIDS cases diagnosed among whites in 2004.^{1,9}
- Although Latino teens (ages 13–19) represent only 16% of U.S. teenagers, they accounted for 21% of new AIDS cases reported among teens in 2003.²

Transmission

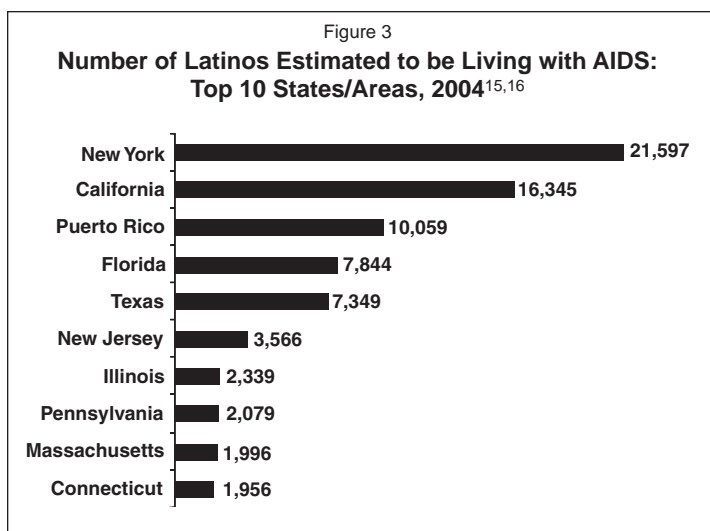
- HIV transmission patterns among Latino men vary from those of white men. Although both groups are most likely to be infected through sex with other men, white men are more likely to have been infected this way. Heterosexual transmission and injection drug use account for a greater share of infections among Latino men than white men.¹
- Latinas are somewhat more likely to have been infected through heterosexual transmission than white women, although this is the most common transmission route for both groups and for women overall. White women are somewhat more likely to have been infected through injection drug use than Latinas.¹
- Latino men who have sex with men (MSM) have also been hard hit.¹² A recent study in 5 major U.S. cities found that 17% of Latino MSM in the study were infected with HIV

compared to 46% of African American MSM and 21% of white MSM.¹³ Knowledge of HIV status among those already infected is also very low.¹⁴

Geography

Although AIDS cases among Latinos have been reported throughout the country, the impact of the epidemic on Latinos is not uniformly distributed:

- AIDS case rates per 100,000 population for Latinos are highest in the eastern part of the U.S., particularly in the Northeast.¹⁵ The Northeast also has the greatest proportion of Latinos estimated to be living with AIDS (38% in 2004) and new AIDS cases among Latinos (36%).^{15,16}
- Estimated AIDS prevalence among Latinos is clustered in a handful of states, with 10 states accounting for 89% of Latinos estimated to be living with AIDS in 2004. New York, California, and Puerto Rico top the list (Figure 3).^{15,16} Ten states also account for the majority of newly reported AIDS cases among Latinos (87% in 2004).^{15,16}
- AIDS cases among Latinos vary by place of birth. Latinos born in the U.S. accounted for 32% of estimated AIDS cases among Latinos in 2004, followed by Latinos born in Puerto Rico (18%) and Mexico (17%).¹ HIV transmission patterns among Latinos also vary by place of birth.¹



Access to and Use of the Health Care System

- The HIV Cost and Services Utilization Study (HCSUS), the only nationally representative study of people with HIV/AIDS receiving regular or ongoing medical care for HIV infection, found that Latinos fared more poorly on several important measures of access and quality, differences that diminished over time but were not completely eliminated.³ In addition, HCSUS found that Latinos were more likely to report postponing medical care due to factors such as lack of transportation.⁴ Latinos were also more likely than whites to delay care after HIV diagnosis.⁵
- The HCSUS study found that Latinos with HIV/AIDS were more likely to be publicly insured or uninsured than their white counterparts, with half relying on Medicaid compared to 32% of whites. Approximately one quarter of Latinos with HIV/AIDS (24%) were uninsured compared to 17% of whites. Latinos were also about half as likely to be privately insured than whites (23% compared to 44%).¹⁷

- CDC data indicate that over a third of Latinos with HIV diagnoses (39%) were tested for HIV late in their illness—that is, diagnosed with AIDS within one year of testing positive—in the 35 areas with HIV reporting; a similar proportion of whites (38%) and African Americans (39%) was tested late.¹
- Among the U.S. population overall, Latinos are more likely than whites to report ever having been tested for HIV (53% compared to 44%). However, these self-reported testing rates may be overestimates, since 22% of Latinos assumed that the test was a routine part of an exam.¹⁸

Concern About HIV/AIDS¹⁹

Latinos are concerned about HIV/AIDS: 31% name HIV/AIDS as the most urgent health problem facing the nation, ranked second after cancer, and Latinos are more likely to say they are personally concerned about becoming infected than whites. More Latinos believe the U.S. is making progress on the domestic epidemic (47%) than losing ground (30%), as do whites; by contrast, African Americans are more likely to say the U.S. is losing ground. Although 30% of Latinos say they are personally very concerned about becoming infected with HIV, this proportion has declined since the mid 1990's.

Conclusion

The HIV/AIDS epidemic continues to affect the Latino population in the United States, as reflected in current data and trends over time, presenting important challenges to policymakers, public health practitioners, and community leaders. As the largest and fastest growing ethnic minority group in the U.S., addressing the impact of HIV/AIDS in the Latino community takes on increased importance in efforts to improve the nation's health.

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