

Center for Gonorrhea Excellence

August 2022 | E-Newsletter

Welcome!

The Center for Gonorrhea Excellence was established as part of the CDC-funded **Strengthening the U.S. Response to Resistant Gonorrhea**



(SURRG) grant in Indiana and has become a centralized repository of information on best practices related to management of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* infections, especially as it relates to the threat of antibiotic resistant gonorrhea (ARGC).



The center also focuses on improving the quality of data pertaining to people diagnosed with gonorrhea, which will improve our understanding of the risk factors associated with acquiring gonorrhea and the healthcare seeking behaviors practiced by patients that have been diagnosed. These activities will be included in another CDC-funded project in Indiana, the **STD Surveillance Network (SSuN)** grant and will enhance our STD surveillance activities at the state and local level.

Gonorrhea in the news— The *health disparities* issue

This section includes national and international headlines relating to gonorrhea.

CDC Director calls for change among systems that create inequities

During the global COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. saw a marked increase in the rates of STDs, especially gonorrhea and syphilis. Leandro Mena, the new director of the Division of STD Prevention at CDC, said that, “Social and economic factors—such as poverty and health insurance status—create barriers, increase health risks, and often result in worse health outcomes for some people. If we are to make lasting progress we have to understand the systems that create inequities and work with partners to change them.”... [\[read more\]](#).

Study finds racial disparities and social determinants impact Black women

A systematic review of 32 peer-reviewed articles, including findings from over 18,900 Black women, found that Black women who were more likely to report having an STI over the course of their lifetime engaged in behaviors associated with greater risk, the most common of which were unprotected sex, disproportionate partner power, and substance abuse. Black women were also less likely to discuss or feel comfortable discussing their sexual health with health care providers... [\[read more\]](#).

Information hub

The following sections provide specific resources available from the center as they pertain to best practices around gonorrhea. If you'd like to see more resources in these hubs, please let us know.

Did you know?

Black women have **7x higher** rates of **gonorrhea** and are infected with **syphilis** at a rate more than **8x greater** than their White counterparts.



Provider resources



STDs remain a major public health concern in the U.S., especially among women, who disproportionately bear the long-term consequences of STDs. Although most STDs are preventable and curable, some women, especially those of color, have trouble talking to their doctor about their sexual health. The CDC has a great “waiting-room” [sheet](#) about facts as they relate to women and STDs. Try hanging this up or leaving in your lobby to increase interest in testing and conversations with your female patients!

Data & surveillance



The Black community in Indiana is disproportionately affected by gonorrhea, especially in areas in the northern and southern parts of the state, such as **St. Joseph, Elkhart, and Vanderburgh counties**, where rates of disease from 2020 were highest. The state as a whole averaged **near 1,000 cases** of gonorrhea per 100,000 population among Blacks, with rates in the top three counties being well above this, at 1,667, 1,332, and 1,282 cases per 100,000 population respectively. A full STD epidemiological profile, including a highlight on health disparities, is set to be released by IDOH next month.

Recent ARGC and public health literature

- ◆ [Enhancing Gonococcal Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance in Cisgender Women, Strengthening the US Response to Resistant Gonorrhea, 2018 to 2019](#)
- ◆ [Sociodemographic factors associated with gonorrhea and chlamydia infection in pregnancy](#)
- ◆ [American Association of Public Health Declares Opportunity for Action](#)

Upcoming events

- ◆ [Sept 2022 — Partner Services Interview Practicing Skills through CDC Train](#)

State & federal resources

- ◆ [STD prevention website](#)
- ◆ [Center for Gonorrhea Excellence website](#)
- ◆ [CDC Division of STD Prevention](#)

Ending stigma in STDs



In March 2022, the **HIV/STD/Viral Hepatitis Stigma Committee** was established with a mission to address the role stigma plays in achieving health equities and understand social barriers

of those most impacted by HIV, viral hepatitis and STDs in Indiana. They envision the state of Indiana as being a place with *modernized and standardized policies and legislation* where people with lived experience have access to systems of care that **promote and provide dignity, equity and representation**. In honor of National Day without Stigma, the Stigma Committee will have a table set up at the entrance of IDOH on October 5 and October 6. IDOH employees are encouraged to stop by our table to learn more about our committee and how to combat stigma. The group is also participating in the AIDS Walk on Sept. 25 and planning activities for World AIDS Day on Dec. 1.

Editor's Desk



**Have news or literature you'd like to see featured?
Have an event coming up you'd like to share?**

Contact the newsletter editor to submit for distribution.

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To **promote, protect,** and **improve** the health and safety of all Hoosiers

