

SUMMARY

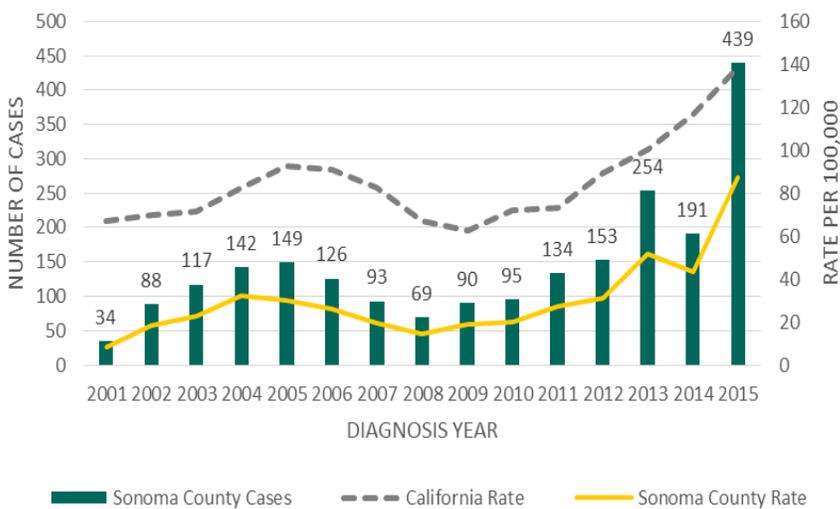
Gonorrhea rates have increased in the United States, California, and Sonoma County in recent years.¹ Increased rates vary by gender, age, and race/ethnicity. Clinicians and providers can help raise awareness and take action by encouraging education, testing, and treatment for patients and their partners.

WHAT IS GONORRHEA?

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted disease caused by a bacteria called *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. Gonorrhea can be spread to both male and female partners during vaginal, anal or oral sex from a partner infected in his or her throat, vagina, urethra or anus. Complications of untreated gonorrhea include pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility and spread of the infection to the bloodstream, skin, heart or joints. Gonorrhea can additionally cause problems during a pregnancy, such as miscarriages or early labor, and can spread from an infected woman to her newborn baby. Gonorrheal infections are curable with antibiotics; however, gonorrheal resistance to antibiotics is increasing and there is only one recommended effective class of antibiotics to treat it.²

INCIDENCE

**Figure 1. Cases and Rates of Gonorrhea by Diagnosis Year
Sonoma County and California, 2001-2015**

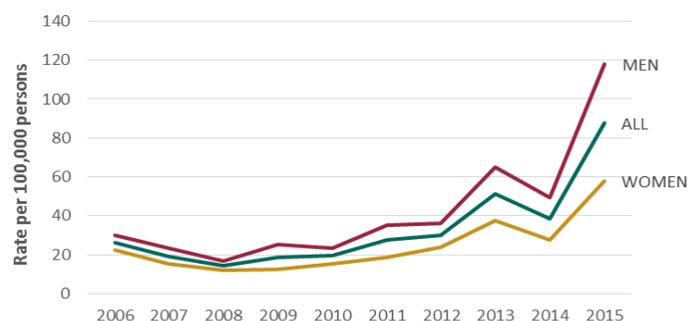


- There were 439 gonorrhea cases reported in Sonoma County in 2015. This was more than double the number of gonorrhea cases in 2014.
- The number of gonorrhea cases reported in Sonoma County increased beginning in 2009 and this increase has accelerated in recent years (Figure 1). Preliminary data from 2016 suggest that this increase is continuing.
- Although the rate of gonorrhea infections in Sonoma County has increased along with neighboring counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco), the Sonoma County rate has been lower than these neighboring counties and California since 2001 (Figure 1).³⁻⁵

GENDER

- Gender differences in gonorrhea rates have become more prominent since 2010.
- From 2014 to 2015, gonorrhea rates among men increased more rapidly than women. There was a 138% increase among men (49.4 cases per 100,000 to 117.8 per 100,000) compared to a 108% increase among women (27.7 cases per 100,000 to 57.8 per 100,000).

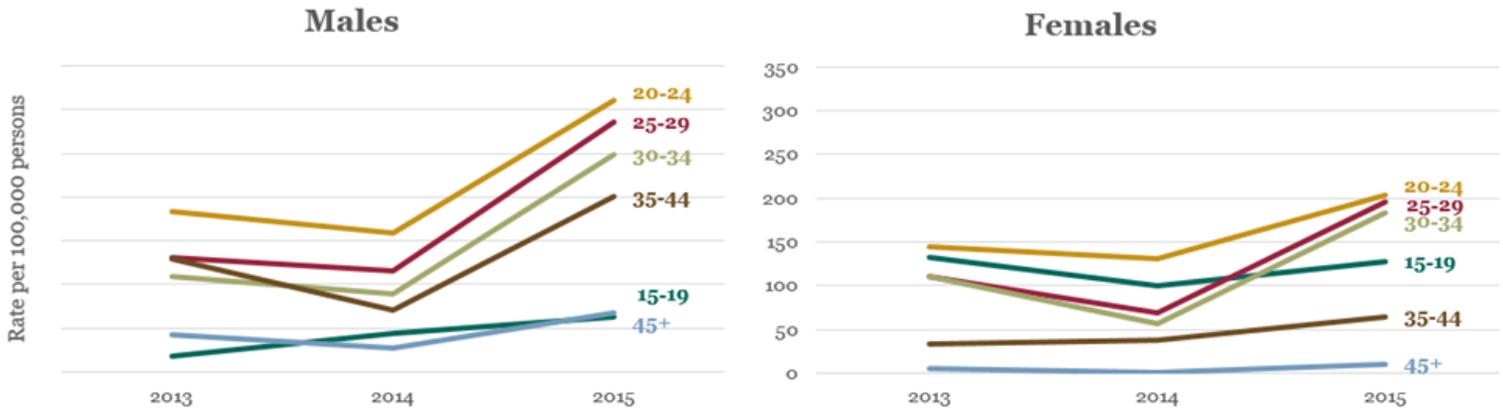
Figure 2. Gonorrhea Rates by Diagnosis Year and Gender, Sonoma County, 2006-2015



AGE

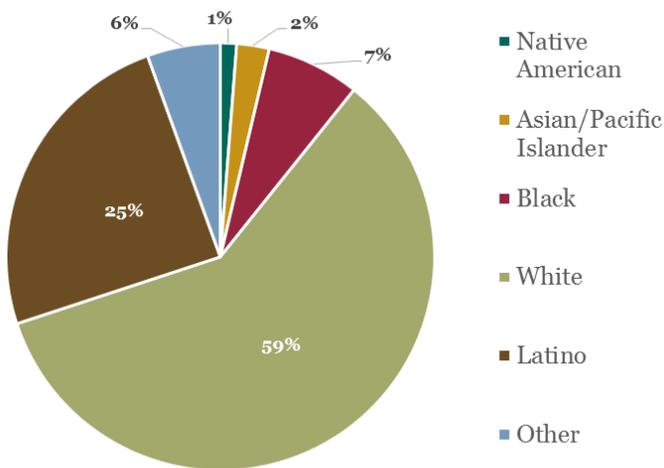
- Between 2013 and 2015, the rate of gonorrhea in men was highest among individuals aged 20 to 24 years, followed by individuals aged 25-29 (Figure 3).
- Although young women aged 15 to 19 years have higher gonorrhea rates compared to 15 to 19 year old men, young men in this age group experienced a greater increase in gonorrhea rates between 2013 to 2015 than young women.
- All age groups, regardless of gender, experienced increased gonorrhea rates from 2014 to 2015 (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Gonorrhea Rates by Diagnosis Year and Gender and Age Group, Sonoma County, 2013-2015



RACE & ETHNICITY

Figure 4. Gonorrhea Cases by Race/Ethnicity, Sonoma County, 2015



- Twenty-six percent (26%) of reported gonorrhea cases in Sonoma County in 2015 had unreported race/ethnicity information. This is similar to California data; in 2014, 25% of California race/ethnicity data was unreported.¹
- Among gonorrhea cases with reported data on race/ethnicity in 2015, 59% (n=193) were White, non-Hispanic, 25% (n=80) were Latino, and 7% (n=23) were Black (Figure 4).
- The distribution of gonorrhea cases by race/ethnicity generally follows the County's racial/ethnic distribution, except for Blacks who make up 2% of the County's population but 7% of gonorrhea cases.⁶

CO-OCCURRING INFECTIONS

- Of the 439 cases of gonorrhea reported in 2015, 20% (n=88) had both gonorrhea and chlamydia diagnoses.
- Less than 5% of the identified gonorrhea cases in Sonoma County in 2015 were HIV positive.

REFERENCES

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