



HIV IN INDIAN COUNTRY

ISSUE

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is a virus that attacks the body's immune system. If HIV is not treated, it can lead to AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). HIV is a public health issue among American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people, who represent about 1.7% of the U.S. population. Compared with other racial/ethnic groups, AI/AN people ranked fifth in estimated rates of HIV diagnoses in 2023[†] with a rate of 9.8 per 100,000* population as compared with Whites at 5.2 per 100,000 population.

BACKGROUND

The Indian Health Service (IHS) [National HIV/HCV/STI Program](#) coordinates and promotes HIV prevention and treatment activities specific to AI/AN people as part of a comprehensive public health approach. The Program's goals are to prevent the further spread of HIV and improve health outcomes for those living with HIV.

STATUS

The toll of the HIV epidemic among AI/AN people can best be understood by reviewing some of the most recent data for 2023. The data illustrate various points of inequity.

- **Key Statistics about HIV among American Indian/Alaska Native People**

- In 2023, there were 202 new diagnoses of HIV infection among AI/AN people.
 - The number of new diagnoses in 2023 represents a decrease of 14 new diagnoses from 2022 (6.5%) but an increase of 27 new diagnoses from 2019 (15.4%).
 - Males accounted for 79% (160 cases) of all new diagnoses, relatively stable with 161 cases in 2022, but an increase of 18.5% (135 cases) from 2019.
 - Women accounted for 21% (42 cases) of all new diagnoses, a decrease of 13 new cases (24%) from 2022, but an increase of 2 cases (5%) from 2019.
 - Consistent with prior years, new HIV diagnoses in 2023 were concentrated among 25 – 34-year-olds (77 new diagnoses) and 35 – 44-year-olds (64 new diagnoses), which together accounted for nearly 70% of new HIV diagnoses.
 - In 2023, the primary transmission mode among men was male-to-male sexual contact, which accounted for 74% of new diagnoses (118 new diagnoses).
 - In 2023, the primary transmission route among women was heterosexual contact, which accounted for 57% of the 24 new HIV diagnoses among women.
 - Between 2019 and 2023, the number of new HIV diagnoses among women attributable to injection drug use was relatively stable at 17 in 2019 and 18 in 2023.
- In 2022[‡], 77.3% of AI/AN people living with HIV knew their HIV status – the lowest of any racial/ethnic group.
- In 2023, 83.2% of all AI/AN people diagnosed with HIV were linked to care, and 63.9% achieved HIV viral suppression within six months as compared to 83.4% and 70.5%, respectively, for Whites.
- In 2022[‡], out of every 100 AI/AN persons with diagnosed HIV, 76 persons received some care, 54 persons were retained in care, and 65 persons had achieved viral suppression.

- **Disparities in HIV Experienced by American Indian/Alaska Native People**

- In 2023, the rate of new HIV diagnoses among AI/AN persons was 9.8 (per 100,000 population), more than twice the rate of 5.2 (per 100,000 population) experienced by Whites.
- Between 2019 and 2023, new HIV diagnoses among AI/AN persons increased by 16%, making them the only group other than Hispanic/Latino and Asian to see an increase.
- In 2022[‡], AI/AN people had the lowest level of knowledge of HIV status than any other racial or ethnic group.
- In 2023, the rate of HIV diagnosis among AI/AN women, 4.0 (per 100,000), was over twice as high as the rate of HIV diagnosis among White women (1.8%).

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please contact the IHS Public Affairs Staff at 301-443-3593 for a referral to the appropriate spokesperson.

*The source for all HIV surveillance data is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NCHHSTP Atlas Plus. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/about/atlasplus.html>. Accessed November 5, 2025.

†HIV surveillance data for 2023 is the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

‡Data for 2022 is the most recent available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.cdc.gov