



ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER
WELLNESS CENTER

HIV and Asians & Pacific Islanders: *National Epidemic*

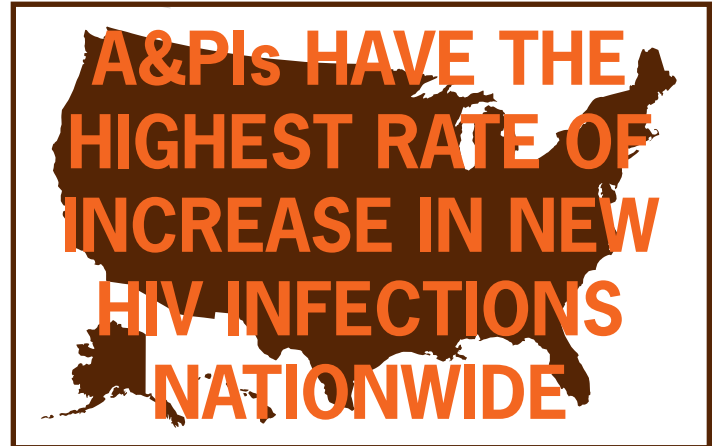
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HIV AND A&PIs: NATIONAL DATA

Recent analysis of data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reveals that A&PIs have the highest rate of increase in new HIV infections in the nation, the only statistically significant growth among any racial or ethnic group (4.4%) During the same time period, the rate of HIV infection declined for all other racial and ethnic groups.¹

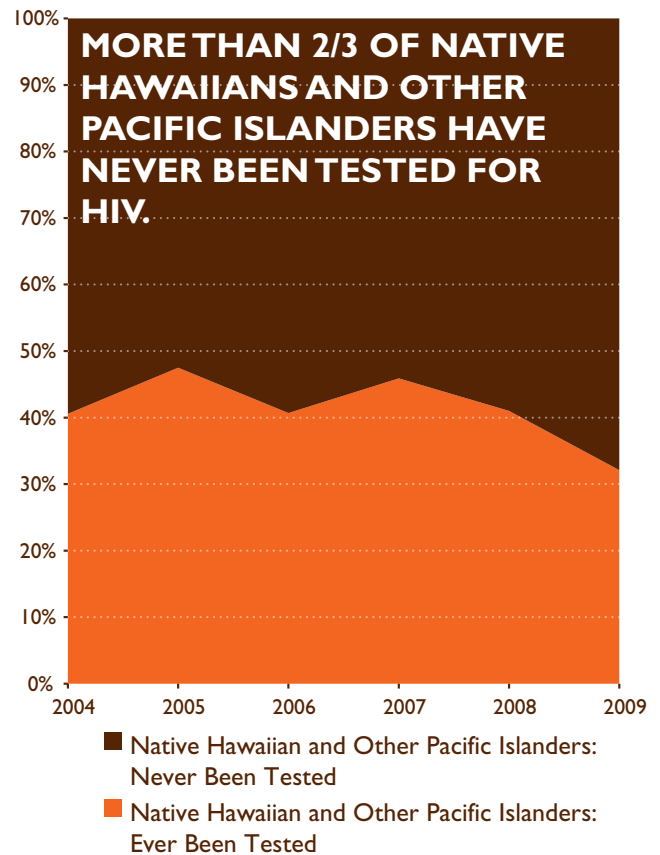
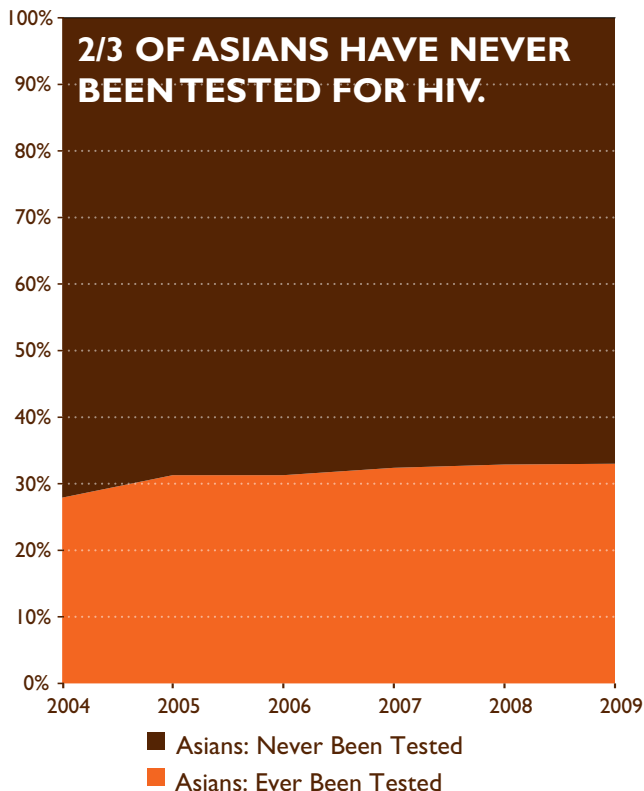
Two-thirds of Asians, Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders have never been tested for HIV. In fact, A&PIs have the lowest HIV testing rates of all races and ethnicities: 37.9% of Whites, 57.8% of Blacks or African Americans, 42.7% of American Indian or Alaska Natives, and 42.4% of Hispanic/Latinos report having been tested for HIV.²

Low testing rates and annual increases in HIV infections mean that more A&PIs are getting HIV. It is estimated that 1 in 3

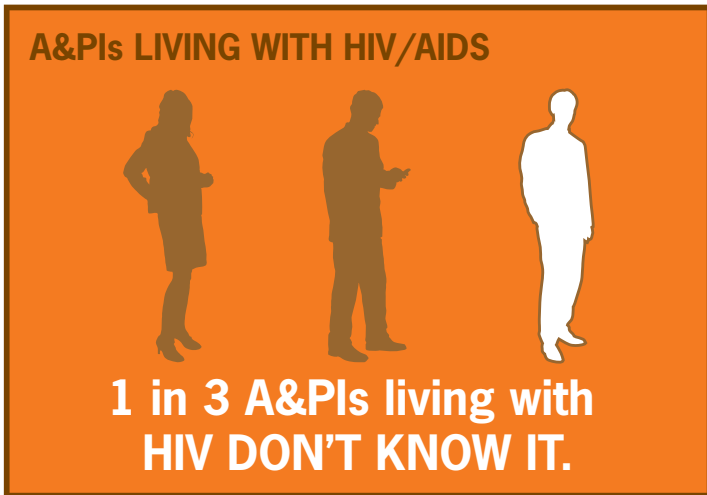


A&PIs living with HIV don't even know it.³ A lack of HIV testing in A&PI communities may mask HIV/AIDS infection rates among A&PIs at the national level. CDC estimates that

Percentage of Asians, Native Hawaiians & other Pacific Islanders who have never been tested for HIV in the United States, 2004-2009.



*Fluxuations in the percentage of Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders testing rates could be explained by improved identification or data collection among NHOPI by HHS/CDC.



470 Asians and 34 Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders were diagnosed with HIV infection in the 40 states with confidential name-based HIV infection reporting in 2008. This data exclude California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington—states with large populations of A&PIs. This means major segments of the A&PI population are not represented in the national picture. When A&PIs do test, it is usually at a late stage in the disease’s progression. At the end of 2008, 36% of Asians diagnosed with HIV developed AIDS, second behind Hispanics and Latinos. CDC also estimates that through the end of 2008, there are 4,861 Asians and 441 Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders living with HIV.⁴

Another analysis of the estimated number of A&PIs living with HIV at the end of 2007 was 3483, but this was in only 33 States and 4 US Dependent areas. Again, this data does not include high A&PI population states.⁵ Without true, comprehensive national data, it’s difficult to fully understand the full impact of HIV in the A&PI community.

Women

A&PI women are often ignored when it comes to HIV prevention messaging and services, but they’re still at risk for HIV. In fact, young A&PI women are the least likely of all races and ethnicities to get tested for HIV. An overwhelming majority of A&PI women living with HIV got it through heterosexual sex (86%).⁶ In OB/GYN settings, A&PI women are less likely to be offered an HIV test than women of other ethnicities.⁷

Trans Women & Men

CDC classifies trans women as “men who have sex with men,” or “MSM,” making it very difficult to determine the extent of HIV infection among the trans community. It is unclear how data is collected for trans men. Very little data exists on A&PI trans women and men; most studies are on male-to-female trans women and in the Bay Area. A literature analysis from 2008 estimated that as many as 27% of male-to-female trans women nationwide may be HIV-positive. Prevalence rates were low for female-to-male trans men.⁸ One San Francisco-based study of A&PI trans women estimated that up to 27%

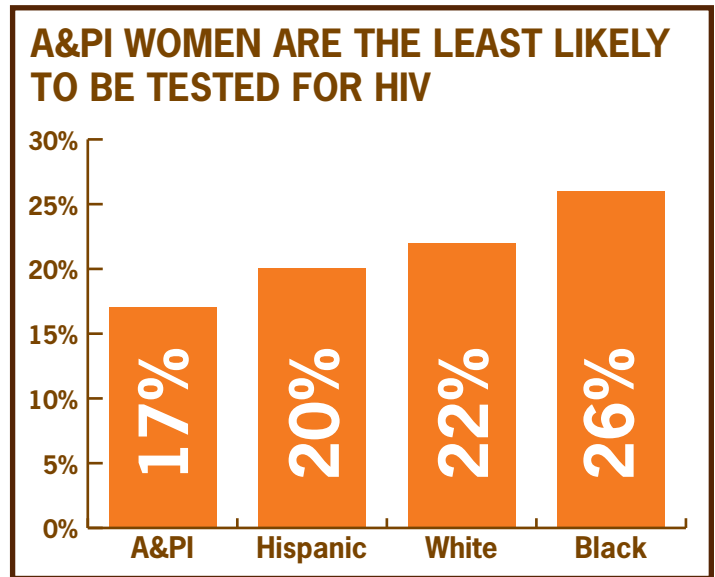
may be HIV-positive.⁹

Young Men

The number of HIV diagnoses among young A&PI gay men more than doubled in recent years. Between 2001-2006, new HIV diagnoses jumped by 255.6%, an estimated annual increase of 30.8%, the highest of all races and ethnicity.¹⁰

Men

Men who have sex with men are by far the largest at-risk group among A&PI men. 77% of HIV cases among A&PI men through the end of 2007 were from male-to-male sexual contact. 12% contracted HIV through heterosexual contact, 6% contracted through injection drug use, and 3% from a combination of male-to-male sexual contact and injection drug use. From 2001-2008, A&PI men had the highest rate of HIV diagnoses, increasing 5.1% each year. This was the highest rate for all races/ethnicities; in fact, the rate for every other racial/ethnic group (except American Indian/Alaska Natives) declined.



References

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¹¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Racial/ethnic disparities in diagnoses of HIV/AIDS—33 States, 2001-2004.” *MMWR Morbidity Mortality Weekly Report* 2006 Feb;55(5):121-5.
¹² *Ibid* 1