

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

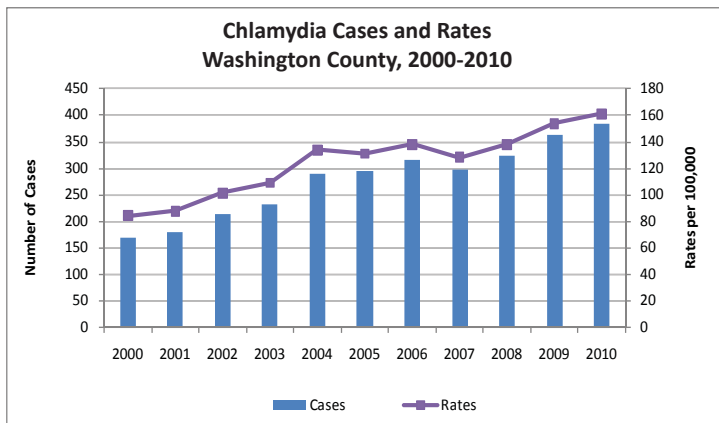
Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are transmitted from person to person by sexual intercourse, most commonly by anal or vaginal intercourse but also through oral sex. Some STDs, such as Hepatitis B or HIV infection, are also transmitted through blood-to-blood contact and through the sharing of needles or equipment to inject drugs, body pierce or tattoo.¹ Pregnant women with STDs may pass their infections to infants during pregnancy or birth or through breast feeding.¹ The greater the number of sex partners, the greater the risk of infection.²

The most prevalent types of STDs are Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Perinatal Hepatitis B Virus, HIV/AIDS, and Syphilis. Chlamydia is the most common STD in the county. It is caused by the bacterium *Chlamydia trachomatis*, which is most notably associated with its ability to permanently damage a woman's reproductive organs. Oftentimes, there are not any symptoms associated with Chlamydia which is why it is often referred to as the "silent disease" and why it is often undiagnosed and untreated.

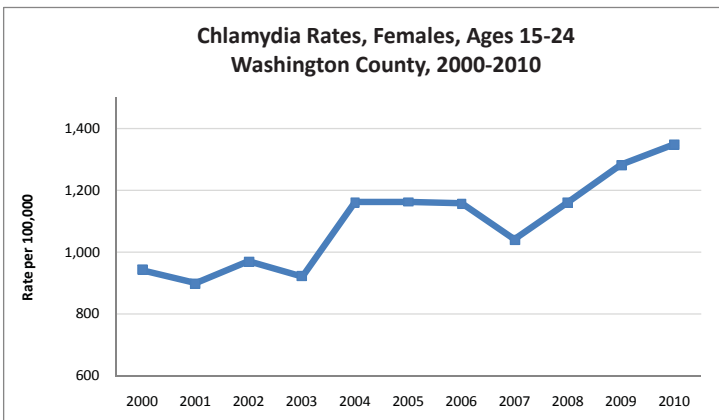
Key Trends

- Chlamydia continues to be the most prevalent type of sexually transmitted disease, both in Minnesota and in Washington County. The number of cases of Chlamydia in the county has more than doubled over the past decade and continues to be most prevalent among females ages 15-24.
- In 2010, Gonorrhea rates were at their lowest levels in the past decade in both the state and the county.
- Chlamydia and Gonorrhea rates are higher among females than males. A key factor is that females are screened for STDs more frequently during routine physical and gynecological exams, compared with their male partners.

Chlamydia



Source: MDH STD Surveillance System County Report



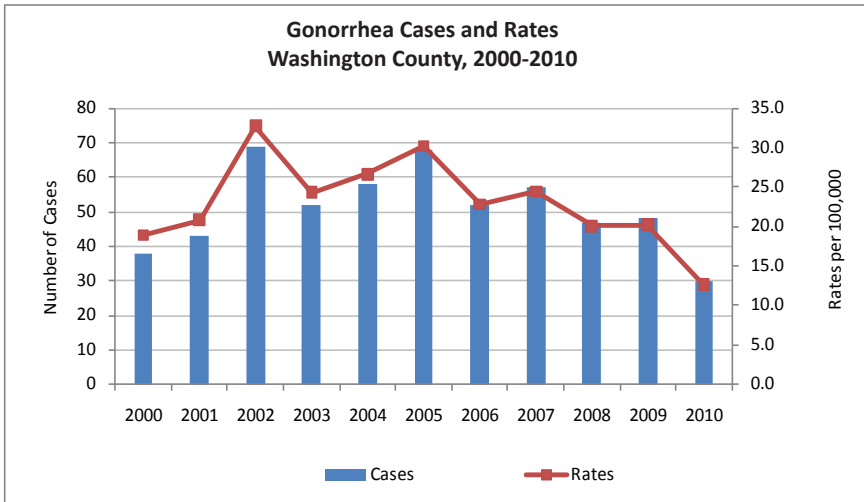
Source: MDH STD Surveillance System County Report

Chlamydia Cases and Rates

- The number of cases of Chlamydia in the county has been increasing each year over the past decade, with the exception of 2007. The number of cases increased from 170 in 2000 to 384 in 2010.
- In 2010, the Chlamydia rate was at a record high for the past decade, at 161.3 cases per 100,000 persons. This compares with 84.5 cases per 100,000 persons in 2000.

Chlamydia Rates, Females, Ages 15-24

- The highest rates of Chlamydia are among females ages 15-24.
- Rates for females in this age range have increased from 944/100,000 in 2000 to 1,350/100,000 in 2010. This was a 43% increase in Chlamydia rates during the past decade for this population.



Source: MDH STD Surveillance System County Report

Gonorrhea Cases and Rates

- There has been an average of 51 cases of gonorrhea annually over the past decade in Washington County.
- In 2010, there were 30 cases of gonorrhea. This compares with 38 cases reported in 2000.
- The age group with the highest number of cases of gonorrhea and the highest gonorrhea rates continues to be females ages 15-29.
- In 2010, the gonorrhea rate in the county was 12.6 per 100,000 persons. This was the lowest rate over the past decade.

2010 Diagnosed Cases of Sexually Transmitted Diseases in Washington County

Number of cases:

Chlamydia: 384

Gonorrhea: 30

Syphilis: 6

Hepatitis B: <5

**Hepatitis B
Infant Perinatal:** <5

HIV/AIDS: 21

- HIV: 13
- AIDS: 8

Definitions

Chlamydia: A bacterial infection, oftentimes without symptoms, especially in women. Untreated Chlamydia can cause sterility, Pelvic Inflammatory Disease, and increase the chances for life-threatening tubal pregnancies.

Gonorrhea: A bacterial sexually transmitted disease, oftentimes without symptoms. When symptoms are present, they resemble those of Chlamydia and usually appear 2 to 5 days after sexual activity with an infected partner. Gonorrhea can cause Pelvic Inflammatory Disease if left untreated.

Syphilis: A three-stage STD. The first symptom appears 10 days to 3 weeks after exposure and is characterized by a painless red sore on the genitals or inside the vagina. Second-stage symptoms include a skin rash and flu-like symptoms. If left untreated, syphilis progresses into a latent stage that can lapse into third-stage, or tertiary, syphilis. Complications from tertiary syphilis are severe and can include mental illness, blindness, heart disease, and death.

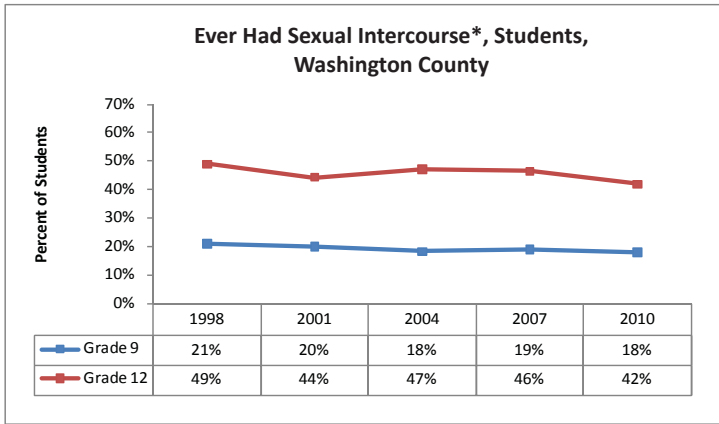
Hepatitis B: A viral infection that can cause damage to the liver, including cirrhosis and liver cancer, and may result in death. It is transmitted through contact with infected body fluids. There is no cure for Hepatitis B, but it can be prevented with a vaccine.

HIV: A viral infection that is passed during sexual intercourse, as well as when HIV-infected needles are shared and from an infected mother to infant. HIV attacks a person's immune system, leading him or her to be susceptible to a host of diseases and conditions, and eventual progression to Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

AIDS: A condition caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), AIDS signifies a serious weakening of the immune system.

2010 Sexually Transmitted Diseases

- In 2010, there were 384 cases of Chlamydia in Washington County. Approximately 73% were cases among females and 27% were among males.
- There were 30 cases of gonorrhea, 20 were among females and 10 among males.
- HIV/AIDS cases were the next most common types of STDs, with 13 HIV cases and 8 cases of AIDS in the county in 2010.

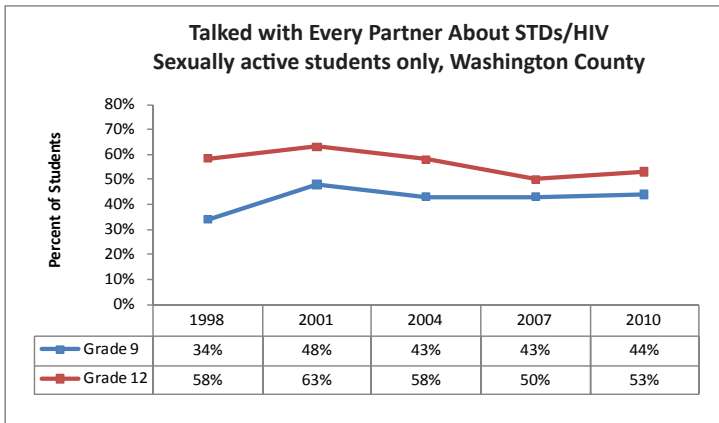


Source: Minnesota Student Survey Interagency Team

* Defined in question as "had sex."

Youth Sexual Activity

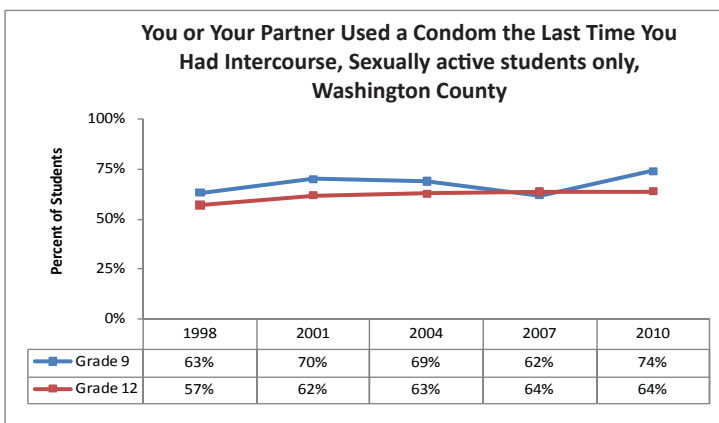
- Sexually active teens and young adults can contract sexually transmitted diseases. In 2010, approximately one fourth of the Chlamydia cases in the county were among the population ages 15-19 which comprises only 7% of the total population. Consequently, public health departments track the sexual behavior of this population.
- For 9th graders, approximately 18% of students reported they were sexually active in 2010, compared with 21% in 1998.
- Approximately 42% of 12th graders reported being sexually active in 2010. This is a slight decline from 49% in 1998.



Source: Minnesota Student Survey Interagency Team

Youth Talking with Partners About STDs

- Less than half of the 9th grade students who report being sexually active talk with every partner about STDs/HIV (44%).
- However, there has been an 11 percentage point increase since 1998 among sexually active 9th graders who talk with every partner about STDs/HIV.
- Among sexually active 12th graders there has been a slight decline in the percentage of students who talk with every partner about STDs/HIV, from 58% in 1998 to 53% in 2010.



Source: Minnesota Student Survey Interagency Team

Youth Condom Use

- In 2010, nearly three-fourths of sexually active 9th graders reported using a condom the last time they had intercourse. This is an eleven percentage point increase from 1998.
- Among sexually active 12th graders, approximately 64% reported using a condom the last time they had intercourse. This is an increase from 57% in 1998.

Contact Information:

Questions about this and other Washington County Health Data Profiles can be directed to:

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Website: www.co.washington.mn.us

Endnotes

¹ Minnesota Department of Health

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

