

Centers for Disease Control National HIV Incidence Estimates Questions and Answers

What are the new CDC HIV incidence estimates?

The HIV estimates released by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) are national estimates of the number of new HIV infections that occurred in 2006. This new estimate provides a more accurate picture of the number of new infections than has been available.

The new estimate of 56,300 new HIV infections in 2006 is higher than the old estimate of 40,000 new HIV cases per year. Does that mean there is an increase in HIV?

No, the new higher number reflects the fact that the new estimate is more accurate than the old one. The two numbers can't be compared because they were calculated differently.

Will Minnesota-specific incidence estimates be available?

No, Minnesota-specific incidence estimates will not be available since Minnesota was not eligible to participate in CDC's incidence estimate project because of our low HIV numbers.

What's the difference between the new CDC estimates and the MDH HIV surveillance numbers?

Minnesota's HIV surveillance figures provide information on the number of infections diagnosed and reported in a given year, regardless of when the person was actually infected. MDH surveillance figures will continue to provide the best information available for describing the HIV epidemic in Minnesota. CDC's new numbers are a national estimate of the number of new infections occurring in a given time period.

How were the new HIV incidence figures calculated?

CDC used a new type of lab technology (STARHS) to identify the number of recently acquired infections. Incidence estimates were calculated using the STARHS data along with information on HIV testing and HIV treatment history.

How can Minnesota programs use the new data released by CDC?

Minnesota programs can use the new national figures to look at the larger context in which the Minnesota data are placed. The new data clearly demonstrate that HIV is still a major public health problem and underscore the need to reach all populations at risk for HIV with effective prevention programs. The best source of Minnesota HIV information will still be the MDH annual surveillance reports on the number of new diagnoses and people living with HIV/AIDS in Minnesota.

What can I do to get additional information?

You can contact Luisa Pessoa-Brandão, HIV/AIDS Surveillance Coordinator at luisa.pessoa-brandao@state.mn.us or check out the following websites:

MDH annual surveillance reports website: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/hiv>.

CDC HIV incidence website: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/incidence.htm>