

Communicable Diseases

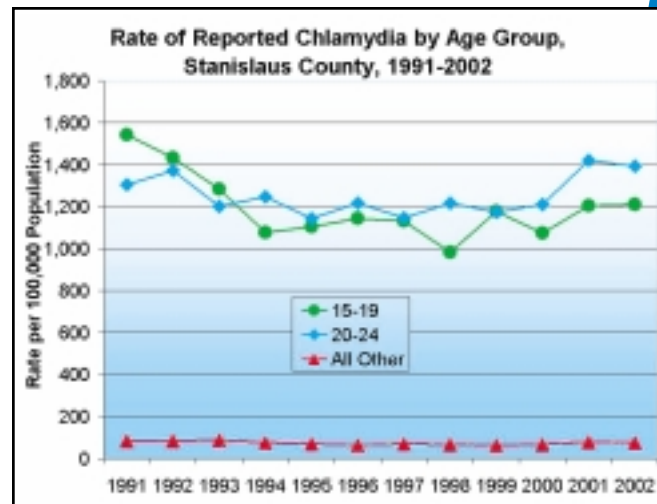
Chlamydia

Chlamydia is the most commonly reported sexually transmitted disease (STD). Untreated chlamydia can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), ectopic pregnancy, chronic pelvic pain, increased risk for HIV infection, and infertility. Because chlamydia does not always present symptoms, screening programs are essential for identifying the infections and reducing reproductive health problems in women. Chlamydia has adversely impacted youth between the ages of 15 and 24 in Stanislaus County.

Chlamydia is more prevalent in youth who have a history of alcohol and drug abuse, multiple sexual partners, physical and emotional abuse, and poor access to health care. Studies of chlamydia among people in jail, especially teen females, have demonstrated higher rates than the general public. Chlamydia awareness is still the greatest need in this county.

SCHSA is working on several chlamydia projects:

- **Community Awareness and Prevention Program (CAPP)** helps Public Health plan and implement prevention and awareness of Chlamydia and other STDs.
- **Get Tested!** Campaign supports chlamydia screening for high-risk youth between the ages of 15-24 in settings such as juvenile hall and alternative educational institution. This two-year project was a collaborative effort screening close to 3000 youths with 9% of the youths testing positive.
- **Chlamydia Screening Project** is a partnership between juvenile hall and Public Health that expands the chlamydia screening of high-risk female adolescents in juvenile detention facilities. This project has screened to date 527 adolescents with 9.5% testing positive.
- **Health Opportunities for Teens: Screening, Prevention, and Treatment of STDs (HOTSPoTS)** is a project to decrease the prevalence of chlamydia among high-risk youth within the community.
- **Community Health Action Project (CHAP)** is a teen-driven program to decrease and prevent chlamydia in youth ages 15-24.

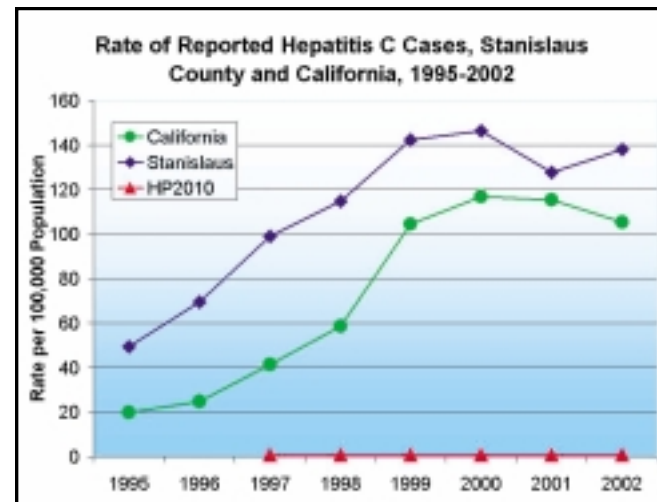


Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is the most common chronic blood borne infection and is the leading cause for liver transplants. It is a viral infection that attacks the liver and is transmitted primarily through contact with blood. Some of the risk factors for hepatitis C are exposure to blood/blood products, intravenous drug use, and sexual activity. Our county is ranked 44 out of 58 counties (14th worst) in the state with over 600 new cases of hepatitis C each year.

A community advocate thinks, "Committed educational programs are needed to prevent the spread of this disease."

The Hepatitis C Task Force was convened last year to address this emerging health issue in our county. The task force includes government agencies, nonprofits, community advocates, and providers. It will develop a plan to identify: impact of the disease (research and surveillance), prevention needs of high-risk populations, professional and public education needs, and medical management and rehabilitation. HSA will seek funding to help implement the goals and objectives of the completed plan.



Public Health was awarded a grant to implement a Hepatitis C educational program. The project was completed last year and provided education to medical providers, counselors, and substance abuse/correctional facilities. As a direct result of the training, Public Health has been invited to become part of the Ray Simon Training Center curriculum to offer Hepatitis C, STD and HIV training for new recruits and continuing education to correctional officers. Hepatitis C support groups are now available in various locations facilitated by Nirvana Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centers and a Hepatitis C community advocate.

Did You Know?

The state now requires HIV to be reported to the Public Health Department. Reporting will help monitor the epidemic, target efforts to prevent further transmission, and will assist with allocating resources for care and treatment.

