

## **Chlamydia trachomatis Infection**

Agent: *Chlamydia trachomatis* (bacteria)

Mode of Transmission: Person-to-person via sexual transmission, or from the genital tract of an infected mother to her infant during birth.

Signs/Symptoms:

**Men:** Urethritis, with discharge, itching, and burning upon urination.

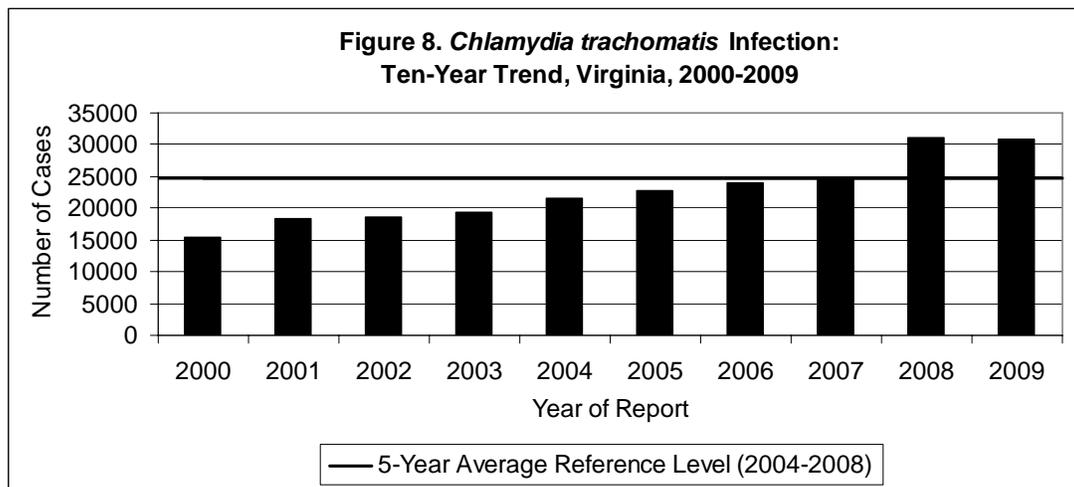
**Women:** Cervical inflammation with discharge, fluid buildup, and easily induced vaginal bleeding.

**Infants:** Infections of the eyes and respiratory tract.

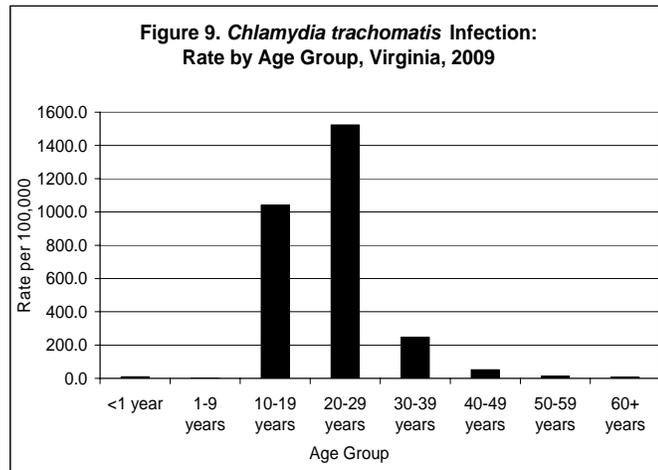
Prevention: Preventive measures include adhering to safe sexual practices; screening of young women under 25 years of age; and presumptive treatment for *Chlamydia* infection among people who are exposed.

Other Important Information: Approximately 70% of infected women are asymptomatic.

During 2009, a total of 30,904 cases of *C. trachomatis* infection were reported in Virginia (Figure 8). This is a 24% increase over the average number of cases for the preceding 5 years, and is more than double the number of cases reported in 2000. The overall incidence rate in Virginia during 2009 was 397.8 per 100,000. Nationwide, the number of reported cases continues to rise. The steady increase in reported *C. trachomatis* infections may be attributed to the use of testing technology with improved sensitivity and specificity, as well as to increased infections. Despite the recent leveling in reported cases in Virginia during 2008 and 2009, the true number of annual infections remains undercounted. This undercounting is related to factors including the commonly asymptomatic nature of *C. trachomatis* infections, presumptive treatment for persons diagnosed with other sexually transmitted infections (e.g., gonorrhea) and screening programs that have historically been limited to high-risk females and male partners of infected women. Although it is expected that more females will be tested than males because of current screening criteria, the number of males screened continues to increase. This increase in detection of disease among males is reflected in the current incidence rates.



In 2009, the highest rates were in the 20-29 year age group (1,523.6 per 100,000) followed by the 10-19 year age group (1,041.5 per 100,000) (Figure 9). Among *C. trachomatis* infections in the less than 1 year age group, six were ophthalmic (eye) infections due to perinatal exposure (see Ophthalmia Neonatorum section). Incidence in the black population (964.5 per 100,000) was more than ten times the rate in the white population (93.9 per 100,000) and almost three times the rate in the “other” population (333.3 per 100,000). The rate of *C. trachomatis* infection in females (566.6 per 100,000) was 2.6 times the rate in males (221.1 per 100,000).



Since 2001, the eastern region has experienced the highest *C. trachomatis* infection rates in Virginia (703.4 per 100,000 in 2009). The lowest rate in 2009 occurred in the northern region (196.2 per 100,000).