

Gonorrhea

Agent: *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (bacteria)

Mode of Transmission: Sexually transmitted through direct contact with secretions from an infected person.

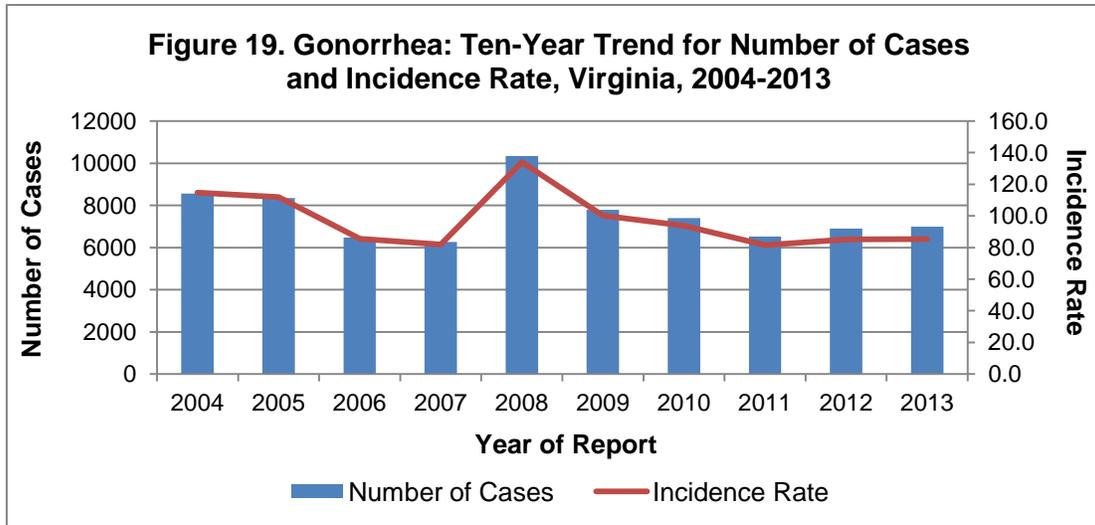
Signs/Symptoms: Infected men can have a burning sensation while urinating and a yellowish white discharge from the urethra. Infected women are usually asymptomatic, although vaginal discharge, burning while urinating, abdominal pain and/or bleeding after intercourse may occur. Symptoms usually appear within a week, but could take up to 30 days. Untreated gonorrhea among women can lead to pelvic inflammatory disorder and infertility.

Prevention: Preventive measures include safe sexual practices and ensuring that infected sexual contacts are treated with antibiotics.

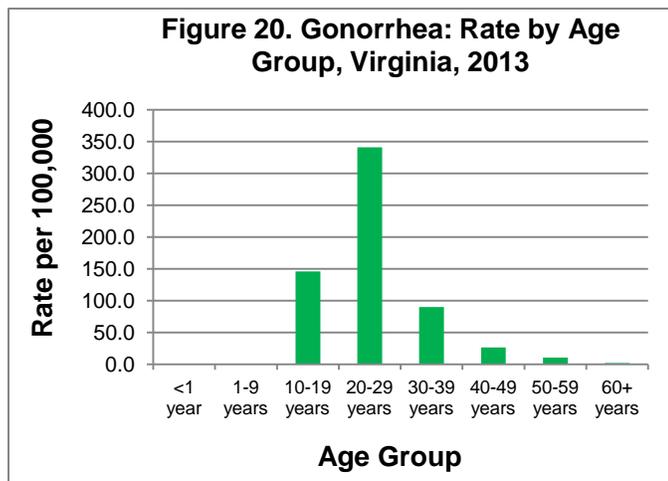
Other Important Information: The progressive development of antibiotic resistance continues to plague gonorrhea prevention efforts. Antibiotic resistance undermines treatment success, heightens the risk of complications and facilitates transmission of infection. Since April 2007, the CDC has advised against the use of fluoroquinolones for the treatment of gonorrhea, based on data indicating widespread drug resistance in the United States. Furthermore, as of August 2012, the CDC no longer recommends cefixime (an oral cephalosporin) at any dose as a first-line regimen for treatment of gonococcal infections. The CDC now recommends combination therapy for gonorrhea with ceftriaxone administered intramuscularly and either azithromycin or doxycycline given orally for 7 days.

Gonorrhea: 2013 Data Summary	
Number of Cases:	6,992
5-Year Average Number of Cases:	7,788.6
% Change from 5-Year Average:	-10%
Incidence Rate per 100,000:	85.4

According to the CDC, gonorrhea is substantially underdiagnosed and underreported, and approximately twice as many new infections are estimated to occur as are reported each year. While 334,826 cases were reported nationally in 2012, the CDC estimates that 820,000 cases of gonorrhea occur yearly. Virginia continues to stay well below the national gonorrhea incidence rate (107.5 per 100,000) at 85.4 cases per 100,000. In Virginia, there was a small (1%) increase in the number of reported gonorrhea cases from 6,894 in 2012 to 6,992 in 2013. However, this still represents a 10% decrease from the 5-year average of 7,788.6 cases per year (Figure 19). Over the last ten years, the annual number of reported cases of gonorrhea in Virginia has fluctuated. In 2006 and 2007 case counts were notably low, followed by an elevated number of cases in 2008. The marked change in one year can be partly attributed to changes in data handling and data entry protocols. Because of the substantial underdiagnosis of this condition, it is not clear whether the general declines observed since 2008 indicate decreases in actual disease incidence or are a reflection of reduced diagnosis and screening.



The distribution by age group indicates that gonorrhea incidence is highest in the 20-29 year age group (341.0 per 100,000 population), followed by the 10-19 year age group (146.0 per 100,000 population) (Figure 20). Since 1989 these two age groups have led the state for highest incidence rates. Gonorrhea remains the sexually transmitted disease with the most significant racial disparity in Virginia and at the national level. In 2012, the most recent year for which national data are available, the CDC reported gonorrhea incidence rates at 462.0 per 100,000 for the black population, while incidence rates among other races ranged from 16.9 to 124.9 per 100,000. Virginia trails in comparison to the United States, with a rate of 260.8 per 100,000 in the black population. The incidence rate among blacks was almost 16 times the rate in the white population (16.4 per 100,000) and over 6 times the rate in the “other” race category (40.7 per 100,000). Similar to the national pattern, Virginia gonorrhea incidence rates were only slightly higher among females than males (88.9 and 81.7 per 100,000, respectively).



Since 2008, the eastern region has experienced the largest proportion of reported cases, as well as the highest incidence of gonorrhea (see map below). In 2013, 2,723 cases were reported from the eastern region (39% of the total statewide), resulting in an incidence rate of 148.7 per 100,000. The central region had the second highest rate, with 1,869 cases (27%), and an incidence rate of 134.7 per 100,000. Among the other regions in Virginia, incidence rates ranged from 32.4 to 90.5 per 100,000.

Gonorrhea Incidence Rate by Locality Virginia, 2013

