

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.

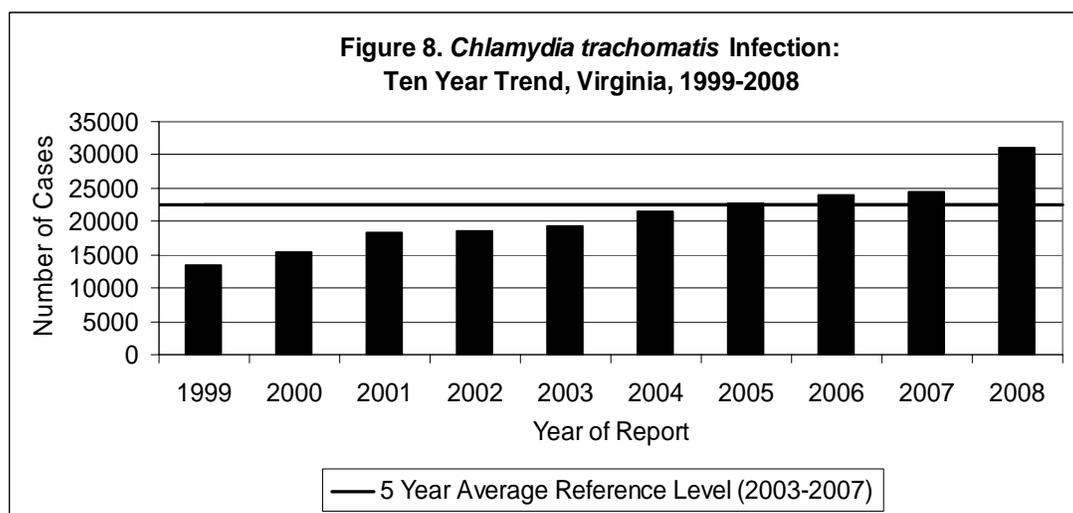
Women: Cervical inflammation with discharge, fluid buildup, and easily induced vaginal bleeding.

Infants: Infections of the eyes and respiratory tract.

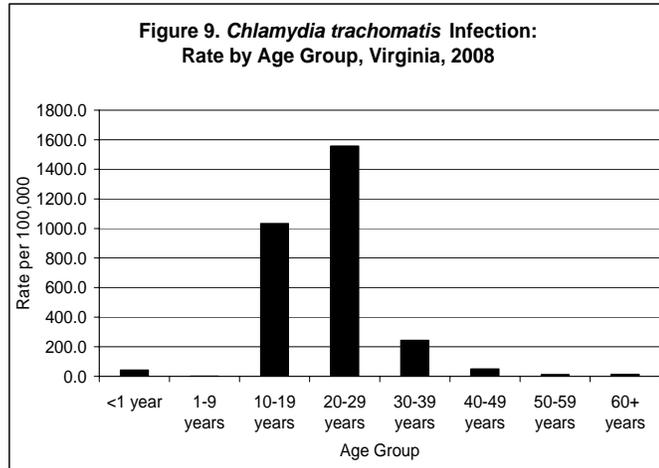
Prevention: Safer sexual practices; screening of young women under 25 years of age; and presumptive treatment for *Chlamydia* infection among people who are exposed.

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

During 2008, a total of 31,205 cases of *C. trachomatis* infection were reported in Virginia (Figure 8). The overall incidence for 2008 (404.6 per 100,000 population) is a 39% increase over the average number of cases for the preceding 5 years and is more than double the 1999 rate. 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 increased infections. Despite the continuing increase in reported cases, the true number of annual infections remains underestimated. This underestimation is related to factors including the commonly asymptomatic nature of *C. trachomatis* infection, 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. While 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 increased incidence rates.



In 2008, the highest rates were seen in the 20-29 year age group (1,558.1 per 100,000) followed by the 10-19 year age group (1,034.2 per 100,000) (Figure 9). Among *C. trachomatis* infections in the less than 1 year age group, eight were ophthalmic (eye) infections due to perinatal exposure (see Ophthalmia Neonatorum section). Incidence in the black population (1,046.0 per 100,000) was more than nine times the rate in the white population (107.3 per 100,000) and three times the rate in the “other” population (348.6 per 100,000). The rate of *C. trachomatis* infection in females (589.9 per 100,000) was more than double the rate in males (210.9 per 100,000).



Since 2001, the eastern region has experienced the highest *C. trachomatis* infection rates in Virginia (702.3 per 100,000 in 2008). The lowest rate in 2008 occurred in the northern region (207.6 per 100,000). No seasonal trend was observed.