

Gonorrhea

Agent: *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (bacteria)

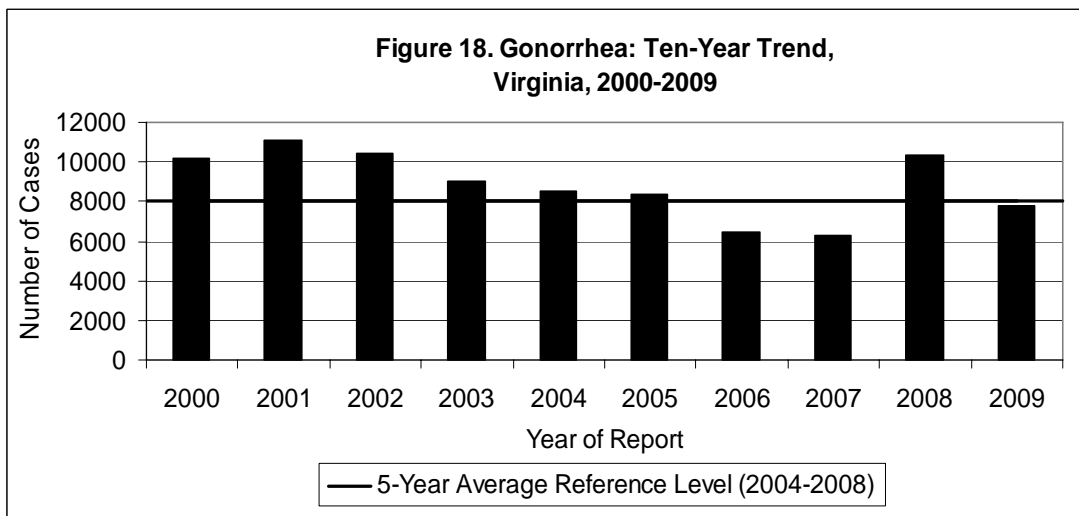
Mode of Transmission: Sexually transmitted through direct contact with infected areas.

Signs/Symptoms: Infected men can have a burning sensation while urinating and a discharge from the urethra. Infected women are usually asymptomatic, although vaginal discharge or bleeding after intercourse may occur.

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

Other Important Information: In 2004, CDC stopped recommending fluoroquinolones as a first-line treatment of gonorrhea in men who have sex with men (MSM) because of an increase in fluoroquinolone resistance. Since April 2007, CDC has advised providers not to use fluoroquinolones (e.g., ciprofloxacin, ofloxacin, and levofloxacin) for the treatment of any gonorrhea infection. In April 2008, cefixime became available again for distribution in the United States. A single 400 mg dose of cefixime is the only oral treatment for uncomplicated gonorrhea of the cervix, urethra or rectum recommended by CDC.

According to CDC, gonorrhea is substantially under-diagnosed and underreported, and approximately twice as many new infections are estimated to occur as are reported each year. In Virginia, reported cases of gonorrhea declined from 2001 to 2007. The number of reported cases subsequently increased in 2008 to 10,336 before dropping by 25% to 7,791 cases in 2009. Morbidity from 2009 was approximately equivalent to the five-year average of 7,997.6 cases per year (Figure 18).



A comparison of age groups indicates that the incidence of gonorrhea is highest in the 20-29 year age group (369.2 per 100,000 population), followed by the 10-19 year age group (230.3 per 100,000 population) (Figure 19). The rate in the black population (359.2 per 100,000) was 26 times the rate in the white population (13.5 per 100,000). Gonorrhea remains the sexually transmitted disease with the most significant racial disparity in Virginia.

Gonorrhea incidence rates were higher among females compared with males (109.2 and 90.8 per 100,000, respectively). The eastern region had the highest incidence rate (209.8 per 100,000), followed by the central region (161.7 per 100,000). Among the other regions in the state, incidence ranged from 30.2 to 57.8 per 100,000.

