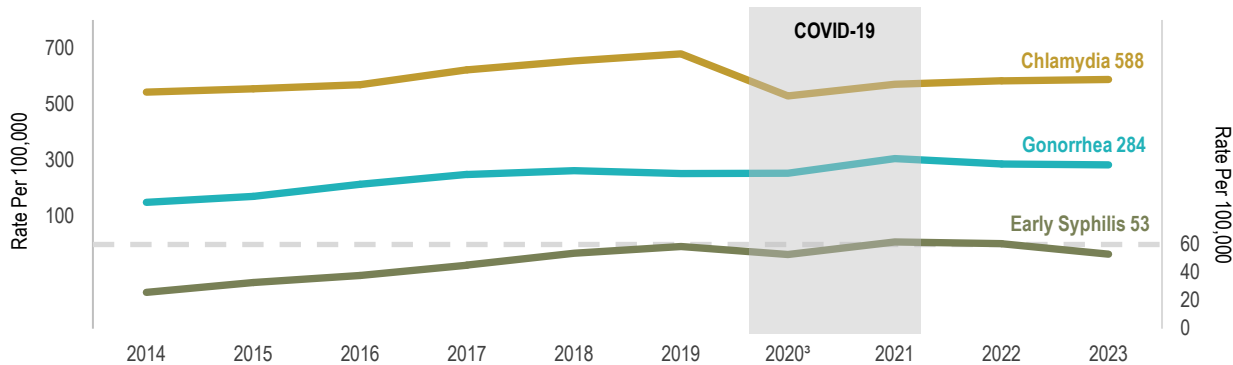


# Sexually Transmitted Infections Los Angeles County, 2023

Over the past 10 years, Los Angeles County (LAC) has observed a steep rise in sexually transmitted infections (STIs) with rates increasing most for congenital syphilis (5.6-fold) followed by syphilis (2.5-fold), gonorrhea (1.8-fold), and chlamydia (1.1-fold). In 2023, a total of 89,887 STI cases were reported to the LAC Department of Public Health. Chlamydia accounted for more than half of the reported cases (60%), followed by gonorrhea (29%) and syphilis (11%). Fifty-two percent of all syphilis cases were early syphilis. **These data do not include Long Beach and Pasadena.**<sup>1</sup>

**In Los Angeles County, the past decade has been characterized by an increasing trend in STI rates.**  
Rates of Early Syphilis, Gonorrhea, and Chlamydia, Los Angeles County, 2014-2023.

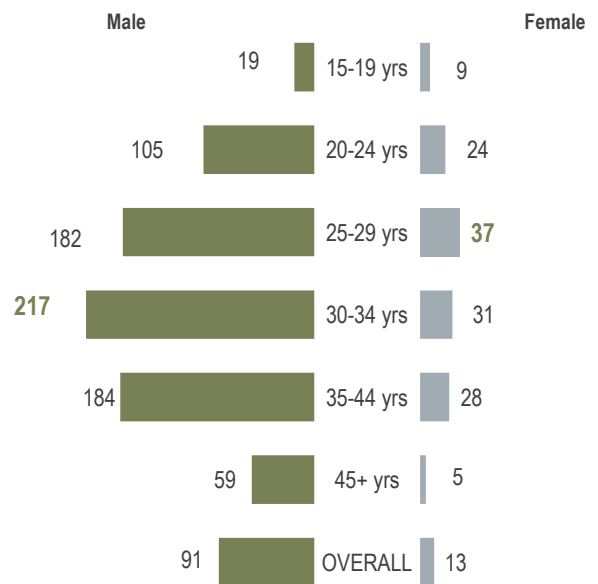


## EARLY SYPHILIS

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection caused by the bacterium, *Treponema pallidum* and is a known risk factor for HIV. If untreated it can cause significant health issues including damage to the brain, nerves, eyes, or heart. Early syphilis includes the infectious stages of syphilis infection.

In 2023, the overall rate of newly reported early syphilis cases in LAC was 53 per 100,000 (4,897 cases). Rates among males were 7 times greater than females (91 vs. 13 per 100,000, respectively). However, rates in females increased nearly 4-fold from 2014 to 2023 compared with a 2-fold increase among males. Males represented 84%, females 13% and transgender individuals 3% of all early syphilis cases.<sup>2</sup> Rates in males aged 30-34 years (217 per 100,000) and females aged 25-29 (37 per 100,000) were higher compared with all other age groups of the same gender. Among males, Blacks and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) had the highest rates of early syphilis (197 and 138 per 100,000, respectively) and among females, Blacks had the highest rate (32 per 100,000). Due to small numbers, syphilis rates were unstable for all American Indian and Alaska Natives (AIAN), and for NHPI and Asian females and therefore rates for these groups are not presented.

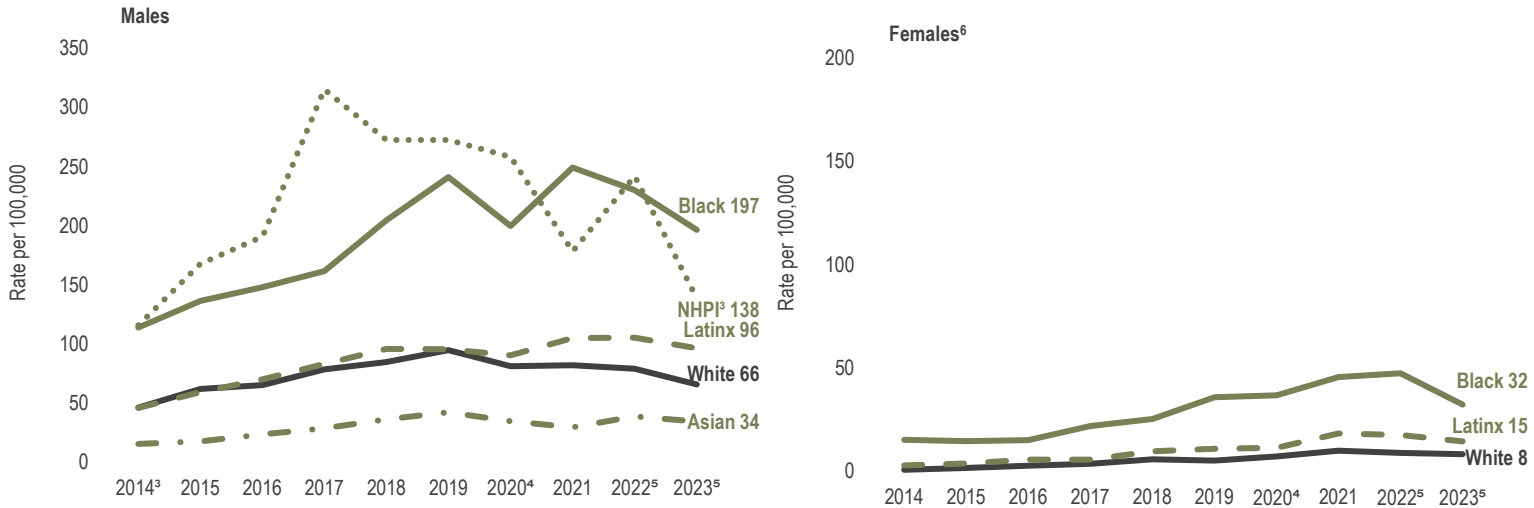
Early Syphilis Rates\* by Gender and Age Group, 2023<sup>2</sup>



\*Rate per 100,000

1. Data source: LAC Division of HIV and STD Programs. Data as of October 7, 2024.  
2. Transgender rates cannot be calculated due to a lack of population size estimates.

**Black and NHPI males, and Black females continue to be disproportionately impacted by early syphilis.**  
**Early Syphilis Rates by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2014-2023**

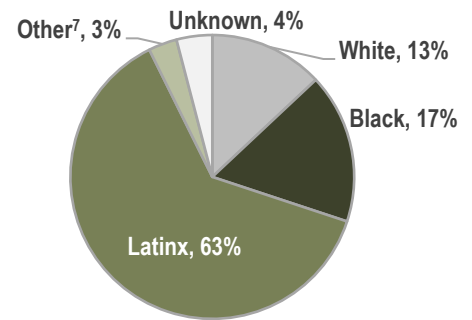


**CONGENITAL SYPHILIS**

Congenital syphilis is caused by the bacterium *Treponema pallidum*. It occurs when this bacterium is transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy, resulting in a wide array of clinical presentations including preterm birth, miscarriage, stillbirth and serious birth defects in infants.

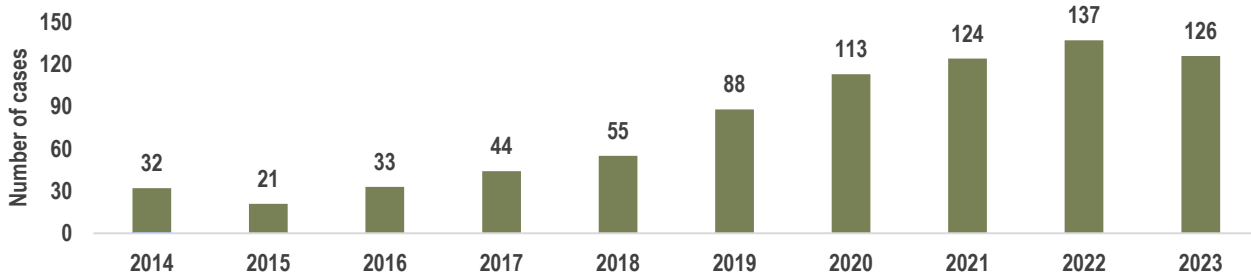
A total of 126 cases of congenital syphilis were reported in 2023, reflecting a rate of 148 cases per 100,000 live births. Since 2014, the number of reported congenital syphilis cases have increased 4-fold. Latinx represented more than half of all congenital syphilis birthing parents (63%) while Blacks, Whites and Other<sup>7</sup> racial/ethnic groups represented 17%, 13% and 3% of birthing parents, respectively.

**Race/Ethnicity of Birthing Parent of Congenital Syphilis Cases, 2023**



**Congenital syphilis cases have been on an increasing trend in Los Angeles County.**

**Number of Congenital Syphilis Cases, 2014-2023**



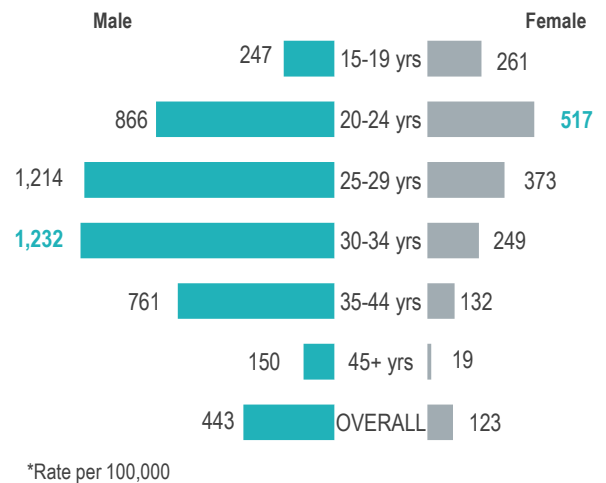
- Note that the 2014 rate for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander males is unstable due to small numbers. Rates for American Indian and Alaska Native males are not shown due to small numbers and unstable rates.
- In 2020, there was a noted decrease in STIs reporting due to decreased screening during the COVID-19 stay at home orders. All 2020 data presented in this snapshot should be viewed with caution.
- 2022-2023 data are provisional due to reporting delays.
- Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander and American Indian and Alaska Native female rates are not shown due to small numbers and unstable rates. The 2014 rate for White females is unstable due to small numbers.
- "Other" category includes Asian, NHPI, AIAN and multirace birthing parents.

## GONORRHEA

Gonorrhea is caused by the bacterium *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* and is one of the most reported sexually transmitted infections in Los Angeles County. It can cause infection in the genitals, rectum, and throat. If untreated, gonorrhea can cause serious health problems including infertility in men and women. It may also increase the risk of HIV infection. Though gonorrhea is treatable, it has progressively developed resistance to the antibiotic drugs prescribed for treatment.

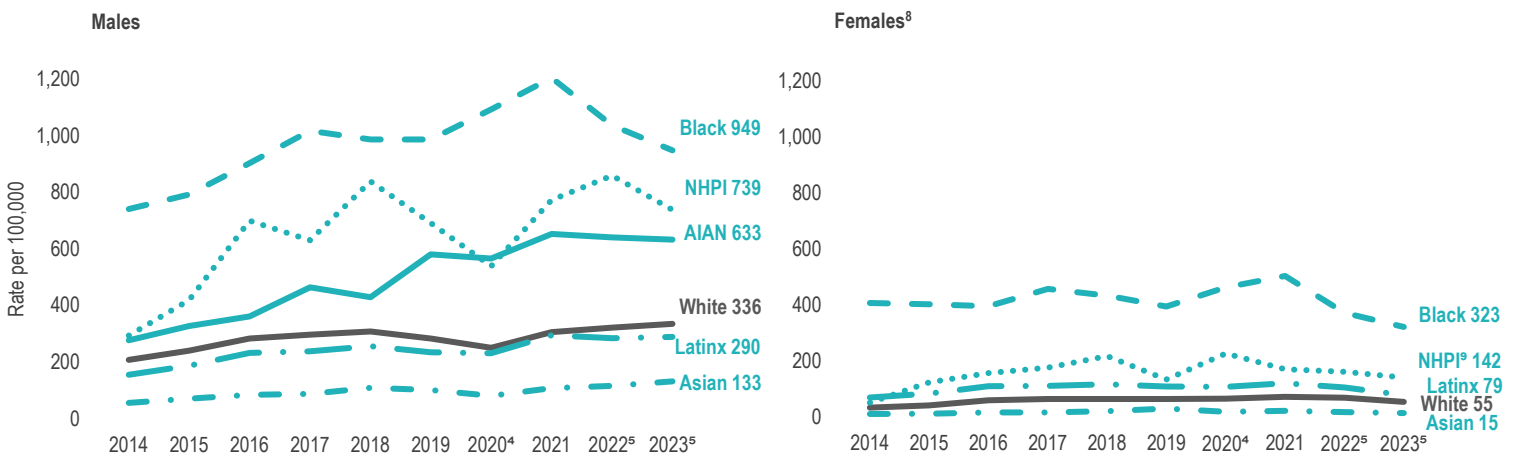
In 2023, 26,163 gonorrhea cases were reported in LAC, reflecting a rate of 284 per 100,000. Rates among males were 3.6 times greater than rates among females in 2023 (443 vs. 123 per 100,000, respectively). Males represented 76%, females 22% and transgender individuals represented 1% of the gonorrhea cases.<sup>2</sup> By age, rates were highest among males aged 30-34 years and females aged 20-24 years (1,232 and 517 per 100,000, respectively). Black males and females had the highest rates compared with other race/ethnicities (949 and 323 per 100,000, respectively). Gonorrhea rates were unstable for AIAN females due to small numbers and therefore these rates are not presented in the figure.

Gonorrhea Rates\* by Gender and Age Group, 2023



## Gonorrhea rates have been consistently highest among Black males and females.

Gonorrhea Rates by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2014-2023

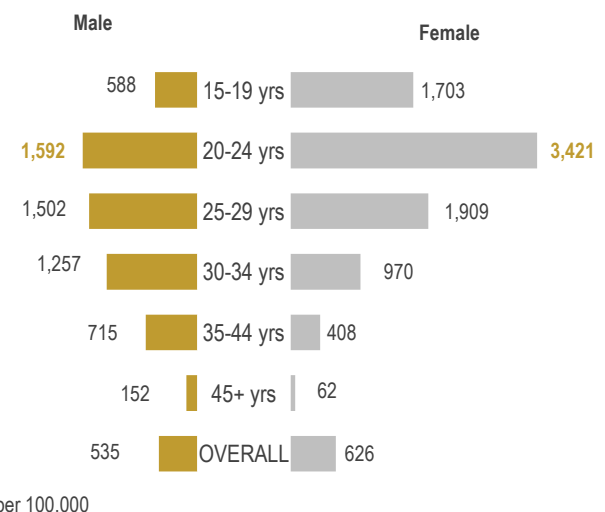


## CHLAMYDIA

Chlamydia is caused by the bacterium *Chlamydia trachomatis* and is the most frequently reported sexually transmitted infection in Los Angeles County. Chlamydia can be transmitted via vaginal, rectal, or oral sex. Chlamydia can cause epididymitis in men and pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) in women. Severe outcomes may include infertility in women.

In 2023, 54,221 chlamydia cases were reported in LAC, reflecting a case rate of 588 per 100,000. Rates among females were 1.2 times greater than males (626 vs. 535 per 100,000). Males represented 45%, females 54% and transgender persons 1% of all chlamydia cases.<sup>2</sup> Chlamydia was most prevalent among males and females 20-24 years of age (1,592 and 3,421 per 100,000, respectively). Note that health care providers in the State of California are no longer required to report chlamydia cases but the reporting requirement for laboratories continues. Consequently, chlamydia data in this report reflect data reported by laboratories only and may be underreported. Since providers are no longer reporting chlamydia cases, race/ethnicity information are not complete and therefore rates cannot be calculated for racial/ethnic categories.

Chlamydia Rates\* by Age Group and Gender, 2023

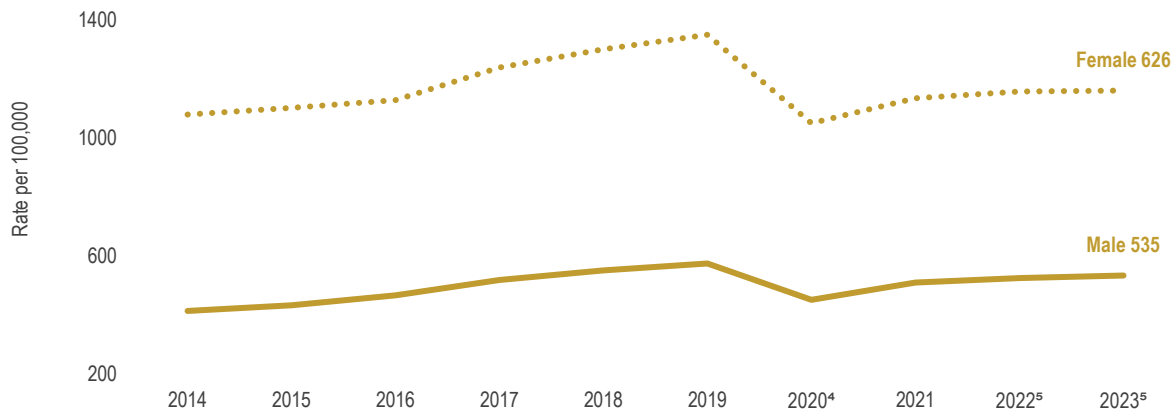


8. American Indian and Alaska Native female rates are not shown due to small numbers and unstable rates.

9. Note that the 2014 rate for Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander females is unstable due to small numbers.

## Rates among females have been consistently higher than males.

### Chlamydia Rates by Gender, 2014-2023



#### Additional Data:

- For more current STI Surveillance trends, see the Los Angeles County HIV and STD Surveillance Dashboards at: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/Dashboard.htm>
- For STI surveillance data at the State level, see the California Department of Public Health, Sexually Transmitted Infection Control Branch at: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/STD-Data.aspx>
- For STI surveillance data at the National level, see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at: [https://www.cdc.gov/sti-statistics/about/?CDC\\_AAref\\_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/std/statistics/default.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/sti-statistics/about/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/std/statistics/default.htm).

#### Suggested Citation:

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