

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are some of the most frequently reported infections at the local, state, and national level. While STIs can impact anyone, there are persistent disparities based on gender, age, and race/ethnicity. This report covers three bacterial STIs: chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis. Bacterial STIs are curable, but untreated infections can sometimes cause irreversible damage including infertility. Symptoms of STIs vary, and are often mild or absent, making routine screening notably important to ensure prompt treatment. Pregnant women and their unborn children are especially vulnerable to complications of STIs. The COVID-19 pandemic may have contributed to decreased STI screening in 2020.

Chlamydia

The number of reported chlamydia cases in Sacramento County decreased by 4.2% from 7,996 in 2012 to 7,659 in 2021 [Figure 1]. The case rate has also decreased by 16.2% during this time. In 2020 and 2021, both the County chlamydia rate and count of cases have declined to levels comparable to the State. This decrease may be partially attributable to a change in reporting requirements in October 2019. In 2012, the County had a rate 28.4% higher than that of the State but was 0.3% lower in 2021. In 2021, Sacramento County ranked the 16th highest for chlamydia rates in the State, an improvement compared to 2020 at 13th.

Gonorrhea

County gonorrhea cases increased 105.1% from 2,159 in 2012 to 4,428 in 2021 [Figure 3]. The case rate has also increased by 86.7% during this time. From 2012 to 2021, the County has had higher rates than the State. In 2020, the County Gonorrhea rate increased only to level off in 2021 to 279.2 per 100,000. In 2021, Sacramento County ranked the 4th highest for gonorrhea rates in the State, an improvement compared to 2020 at 3rd.

Syphilis

Primary and secondary (P&S) syphilis cases in the County have risen beyond their peak in 2019 by 10.0% in 2021 [Figure 2]. Similarly, the rate increased by 9.0% since 2019. County syphilis rates have generally been similar to the State but have been much higher than the State over the last four years – 36.0% higher than the State in 2021. Sacramento County ranked the 12th highest rate among all California counties in 2021, an improvement compared to 2020 at 10th.

Figure 1. Chlamydia Cases and Rates, Sacramento County, 2012-2021

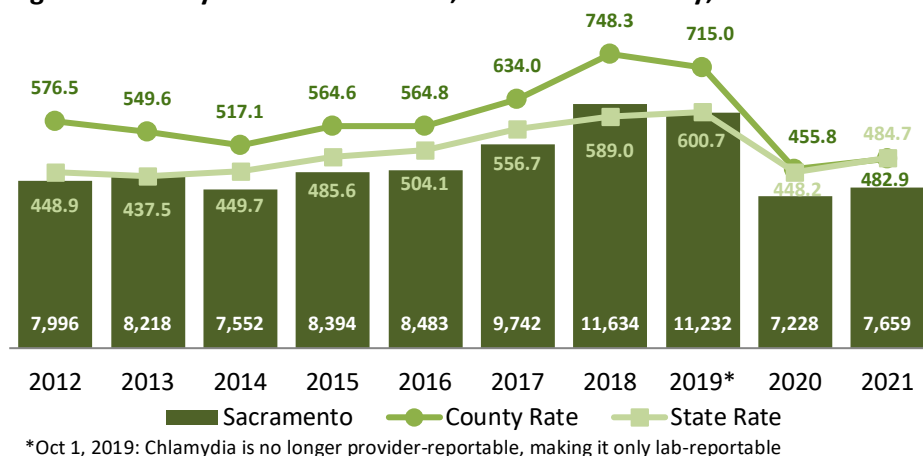


Figure 2. Gonorrhea Cases and Rates, Sacramento County, 2012-2021

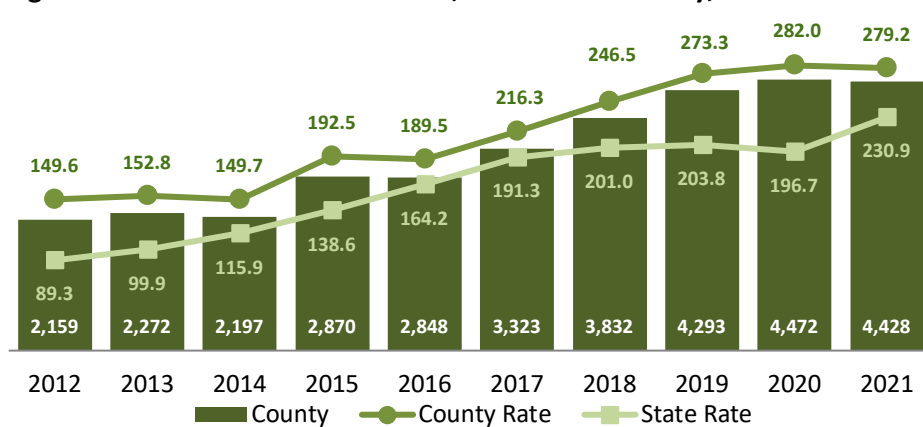
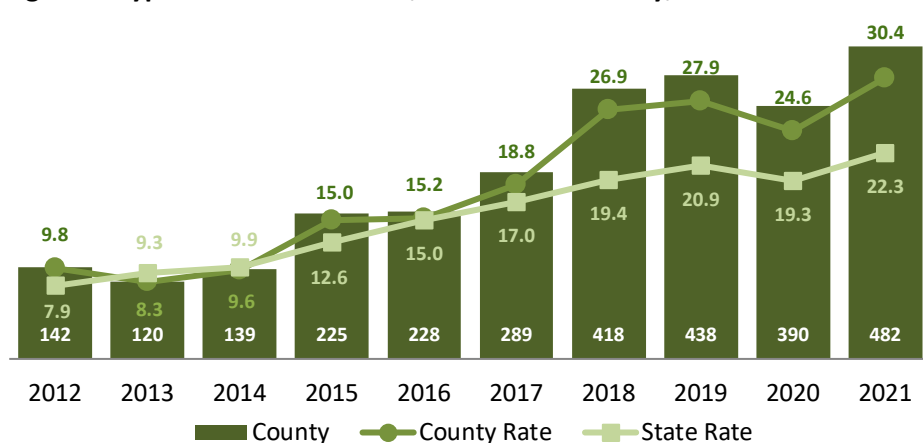


Figure 3. Syphilis Cases and Rates, Sacramento County, 2012-2021



Age and Gender

The majority (62.9%) of County chlamydia cases in 2020 were among females with a rate of 576.9 per 100,000 [Figure 4]. The highest percentages of male cases were in the 20 to 24 (20.2%) and 25 to 29 (18.6%) age groups. Nearly one-third (30.2%) of female chlamydia cases were in the 20 to 24 age group, 16.2% were in the 25 to 29 age group, and 14.1% were in the 15 to 19 age group.

In contrast to chlamydia, the majority (57.3%) of County gonorrhea cases in 2021 were among males [Figure 5]. Nearly one-fifth (17.5%) of male gonorrhea cases were in the 20 to 24 age group, followed closely by the 25 to 29 age group (16.4%). The highest percentage of female gonorrhea cases were in the 20 to 24 (19.5%) and 25 to 29 (16.2%) age groups.

Males also made up the majority (61.5%) of County syphilis cases in 2021 [Figure 6]. The age groups with the highest case rates included the 35 to 44 age group for males (186.4 per 100,000) and the 30 to 34 age group for females (158.9 per 100,000). There were 26 congenital syphilis cases in 2021 with a rate of 138.6 per 100,000 live births in the County. In 2021, the County ranked 18th for congenital syphilis rates in the State, an increase from 21st.

Race/Ethnicity

There were marked disparities in rates of STIs in the County in 2021 [Table 1]. Compared to the White population, the Black population had a chlamydia rate nearly four times higher, a gonorrhea rate nearly six times higher, and a syphilis rate over three times higher. The Hispanic population had slightly higher gonorrhea and syphilis rates than the White population, but a lower chlamydia rate. Asian/Pacific Islanders had the lowest STI rates compared to all other groups. American Indian/Alaskan Native rates should be interpreted with caution due to small population numbers.

Data source: CalREDIE, CDPH STD Branch

Figure 4. Chlamydia Rates by Gender and Age Group, 2021*

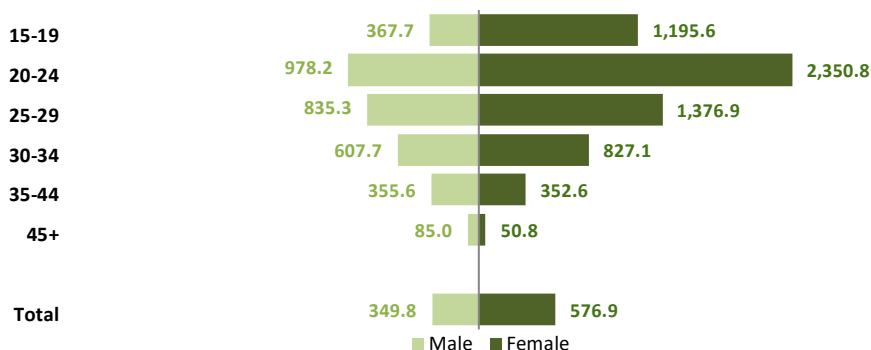


Figure 5. Gonorrhea Rates by Gender and Age Group, 2021*

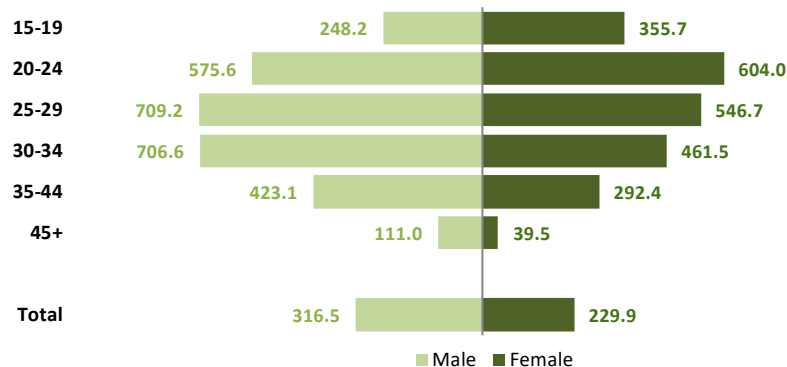
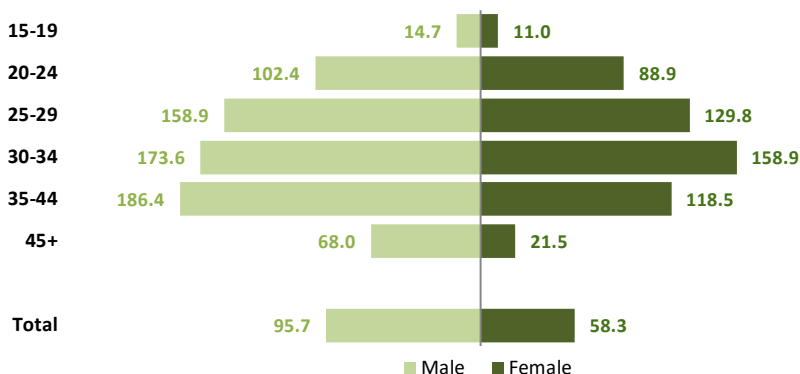


Figure 6. P&S Syphilis Rates by Gender and Age Group, 2021*



* The 0-9 and 10-14 age groups have been removed from the charts due to small numbers

Table 1. STI Rates and Rate Ratios by Race/Ethnicity, 2021

Race/Ethnicity	Chlamydia		Gonorrhea		P&S Syphilis	
	Rate	Ratio*	Rate	Ratio*	Rate	Ratio*
AI/AN**	219.2	1.2	257.9	2.1	51.6	1.1
Asian/PI***	83.3	0.5	42.7	0.4	16.3	0.3
Black	694.4	3.8	714.7	5.9	144.2	3.1
Hispanic	131.5	0.7	117.7	1.0	55.6	1.2
White	181.6	1.0	120.1	1.0	46.7	1.0
Multirace	9.8	0.1	28.0	0.2	3.7	0.1
Total	468.4	2.6	276.2	2.3	78.1	1.7

*White as comparison group **AI/AN = American Indian/Alaskan Native ***PI = Pacific Islander