

# HIV/AIDS among Hispanic Women/Latinas



## Background

In 2013, an estimated 1,610 diagnoses of HIV infection were among Hispanic/Latina females in the United States and 6 Dependent Areas, including Puerto Rico. The rate of HIV infection among adult and adolescent Hispanic/Latina women was 7.0, more than three times the rate of non-Hispanic white adult and adolescent women.

## THE FACTS<sup>1</sup>

- In 2013, Hispanic/Latina adult and adolescent women comprised **15% (20,203,077) of the female population in the United States and 15% (1,392) of diagnosed HIV infections.**
- Heterosexual contact accounted for 86% (1,385) of diagnosed HIV infections among Hispanic/Latina adult and adolescent women, compared to 74% (1,168) non-Hispanic white women and 90% (5,288) non-Hispanic African-American women in 2013.
- In 2013, injection drug use (IDU) was the second most common mode of HIV transmission among adult and adolescent women in the United States.
  - **13%(209) of HIV infections diagnosed** among adult and adolescent Hispanic/Latina women in 2013 were attributed to IDU, compared to 9% (529) non-Hispanic African-American women and 25% (395) non-Hispanic white women.
- The rate (per 100,000 population) of Stage 3/AIDS classification among adult and adolescent women in the United States in 2013 was 4.4 for Hispanic/Latina women, compared to 1.1 non-Hispanic white women, and 25.1 non-Hispanic African-American women.
- From 1985 through 2013, the percentage of Stage 3/AIDS classifications among adult and adolescent Hispanic/Latina women has not changed considerably, hovering at about 20%.

## Differences across location:

- Rates of HIV diagnoses in 2013 among Hispanic/Latina women were highest in the Northeast (39.8), followed by the South (38.9), Midwest (22.6) and West (21.8).<sup>2</sup>
- Rates of Stage 3/AIDS diagnoses in 2013 among Hispanic/Latina women were **highest in the Northeast (11.5)**, followed by the South (5.0), Midwest (2.5), and West (1.7).<sup>2</sup>
- Adult and adolescent women in Puerto Rico are disproportionately impacted by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. For example:<sup>2</sup>
  - The rate of adult and adolescent women living with diagnosed HIV infection year-end 2012 was **360.4 in Puerto Rico**, compared to 169.4 across all United States and 6 Dependent Areas.
  - The rate of Stage 3/AIDS classification among adult and adolescent women with HIV infection in 2013 was 6.6 in Puerto Rico, compared to 4.8 in the United States and 6 Dependent Areas.

## Risk Factors

- Uninsured and underinsured Hispanic/Latina women face several barriers in accessing quality healthcare, including HIV testing and/or treatment.<sup>3</sup>
- Risk factors for Hispanic/Latina women (such as condom use, accurate assessment of individual and/or partner's risk, etc.) **may vary depending on country/territory of birth**; length of time living in the United States; immigration generation and documentation status, level of education attained, household income and age.<sup>4,5</sup>
- For many adult women, including Hispanic women/Latinas, the health of their family is a high priority that can often take precedence over personal health due to time, financial resources, and competing responsibilities (i.e. work, school, childcare, etc.). This may result in some **Hispanic/Latina women delaying primary care** and/or women's sexual and reproductive health care (including HIV/STI testing) until there is a pressing need or an emergency.<sup>6</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015, February). HIV Surveillance Report, 2013; vol. 25. <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/reports/surveillance/>. Accessed August 27, 2015.
- <sup>2</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015, July 8). HIV among Latinos. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/raciaethnic/hispaniclatinos/index.html>.
- <sup>3</sup>Kates J, Levi J. Insurance coverage and access to HIV testing and treatment: considerations for individuals at risk for infection and for those with undiagnosed infection. *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, 2007. Volume 45; Issue Supplement 4: S255-S260. [http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/45/Supplement\\_4/S255.long](http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/45/Supplement_4/S255.long).
- <sup>4</sup>Taveras J, Trepka MJ, Khan H, Madhivanan P, Gollub E, Devieux J. HIV risk behaviors among Latina women tested for HIV in Florida by country of birth, 2012. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*. First online: August 7, 2015.
- <sup>5</sup>Zambrana R, Cornelius L, Boykin SS, Sala Lopez D. Latinas and HIV/AIDS risk factors: implications for harm reduction strategies. *American Journal of Public Health*. 2004 July; 94(7): 1152-1158. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1448414/>
- <sup>6</sup>National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators. (2006). A Growing Concern: HIV/AIDS and Other STDs. Retrieved from <http://www.nhcsl.org/healthcare/2006-2.html> on August 27, 2015.