



Homelessness and HIV/AIDS are national issues that have been shown to connect in many aspects. This fact sheet describes the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and homelessness, and highlights the impact of homelessness on people living with HIV/AIDS.

Prevalence of HIV/AIDS and Homelessness

- People living with HIV/AIDS are at higher risk of becoming homeless. A Los Angeles study found that 50% of domiciled people living with HIV/AIDS felt they were at risk of becoming homeless, while a Philadelphia study found that 44% of persons living with HIV/AIDS were unable to afford their housing, a risk factor for homelessness.
- 41% of consumers in AIDS Housing of Washington surveys reported having been homeless since learning they had HIV or AIDS.
- The homeless population has a median rate of HIV prevalence at least three times higher 3.4% versus 1% than the general population. Even higher rates (8.5 to 62%) have been found in various subpopulations.
- A 1995 survey of homeless adults found that 69% were at risk for HIV infection from either unprotected sex with multiple partners, injection drug use (IDU), and sex with IDU partners.
- Homeless women and adolescents are particularly at risk. Single homeless women are more likely to be victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse, both of which have been linked to HIV infection.
- Homeless adolescents are at risk due to higher rates of sexual abuse and exploitation. It has been estimated that 70 to 85% of homeless adolescents abuse substances.
- One study found that AIDS was the diagnosis made in 17% of hospital admissions for homeless patients, and mental illness and/or AIDS was the diagnosis in three-quarters of the cases where a homeless person was hospitalized for more than 60 days.