



# HIV/AIDS

# AND

# AFRICAN AMERICANS



Today there are an estimated **850,000–950,000** HIV-positive individuals living in the United States—the largest number ever—according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Of these, **180,000–280,000** people do not know they are infected, and thus are suffering from a lack of treatment, while at the same time may be unknowingly spreading the virus. About **225,000** more who do know their status aren't getting the care they need. These numbers will continue to grow unless everyone takes decisive action against the disease.<sup>1</sup>

**HIV/AIDS is taking a devastating and disproportionate toll on people of color in the United States. Community leaders and organizations can play a critical role in fighting the disease in their neighborhoods, and The Leadership Campaign on AIDS (TLCA) is dedicated to helping them do it.**

## TLCA: Fighting HIV/AIDS in Communities of Color!

Within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of HIV/AIDS Policy's The Leadership Campaign on AIDS (TLCA) is working externally and internally to support the fight against HIV/AIDS in communities of color. TLCA reaches out to community leaders and local and national organizations to improve education, awareness, and action against the disease. TLCA wants to help minority leaders fight the stigma, fear, and denial that exacerbate the problem, and to help build partnerships that will promote education, prevention, testing, vaccine awareness, and treatment. TLCA also reaches inwardly to help improve the coordination, information-sharing, communication efforts, and effectiveness of the Department's HIV/AIDS initiatives and programs.

Know the facts and  
Educate,  
Motivate, and  
Mobilize against  
HIV/AIDS!

### African Americans:

- Account for **39 percent** of estimated total AIDS cases diagnosed since the beginning of the epidemic through 2002,<sup>2</sup> though they make up only **12.7 percent** of the population.<sup>3</sup>
- Represent an estimated **54 percent** of persons newly diagnosed with HIV in 2002.<sup>2\*</sup>
- Account for **37 percent** of estimated total AIDS deaths and **42 percent** of all persons estimated to be living with AIDS.<sup>2</sup>

### African American adults and adolescents (people ages 13 and older):

- Account for **50 percent** of AIDS cases newly diagnosed in 2002.<sup>2</sup>
- For ages **25–34** and **45–54**, HIV/AIDS was the **third leading** cause of death in 2001.<sup>4</sup>
- Account for **61 percent** of AIDS cases newly diagnosed in 2002 among **13- to 24-year olds**.<sup>5</sup>

### African American men:

- Account for **31 percent** of newly reported AIDS diagnoses in 2002 among men who had sex with men.<sup>2</sup>
- For ages **35–44**, HIV/AIDS was the **second leading** cause of death in 2001.<sup>4</sup>

### African American women:

- Account for **59 percent** of total AIDS diagnoses reported among women through 2002.<sup>2</sup>
- Account for **59 percent** of all women estimated to be living with AIDS.<sup>2</sup>
- For ages **25–34**, HIV/AIDS was the **leading** cause of death in 2001.<sup>4</sup>

### African American children (under 13):

- Account for **68 percent** of all new estimated AIDS diagnoses in children in 2002.<sup>2</sup>
- Account for **59 percent** of total AIDS diagnoses in children through 2002.<sup>5</sup>
- Make up **71 percent** of all HIV diagnoses newly reported in children under 13 in 2002.<sup>5</sup>

# Did you know?

- An estimated **886,575** Americans have been diagnosed with AIDS from the beginning of the epidemic through 2002. Of the **42,136** estimated new diagnoses in 2002, **74 percent** were male and **26 percent** were female. Less than **1 percent** were children under 13.<sup>2</sup>
- **Hispanics** account for **18 percent** of total estimated AIDS diagnoses through 2002,<sup>2</sup> though they make up only **13.4 percent** of the population.<sup>3</sup>
- The number of **Asian/Pacific Islanders** and **American Indian/Alaska Natives** living with AIDS continues to rise, with an approximately **10 percent** increase each year over the past 5 years.<sup>2</sup>
- **Women of color** account for **80 percent** of all women estimated to be living with AIDS. Women across racial/ethnic groups most commonly report heterosexual contact or injection drug use as their primary modes of exposure to HIV, while males most commonly report homosexual contact and injection drug use.<sup>2</sup>

\* In the 30 areas with longstanding HIV reporting

The terms "African American" and "Black" are used interchangeably to include those individuals who self-identify as either. The term "Hispanic" includes those individuals who self-identify as "Latino/a" or "Hispanic."

<sup>1</sup> Fleming, P.L., et al., "HIV Prevalence in the United States, 2000," 9th Annual Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections, Feb. 24-28, 2002, Seattle, WA, Abstract 11.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report 2002*, Vol. 14.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Table NA-EST2002-ASR0-04, National Population Estimates, Characteristics (June 2003).

<sup>4</sup> National Center for Health Statistics, *National Vital Statistics Report*, Vol. 52, No. 9 (Nov 2003).

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Supplemental Report 2002*, Vol. 10, No. 1.

The Leadership Campaign on AIDS is a program of the Office of HIV/AIDS Policy—202-690-5560—www.hhs.gov

Note: The models shown are for illustrative purposes only.



# What Can You Do?

- Learn more about HIV/AIDS and its impact on your community.
- Protect yourself against HIV infection. Know the risks associated with sex and drug use.
- Get tested. It's important to know your HIV status to protect yourself and others.
- Get medical care and support if you're living with HIV. Effective treatments exist.
- Educate others about HIV/AIDS. Talk openly and honestly about prevention and treatment.
- Volunteer at a local HIV/AIDS organization.
- Post fact sheets about HIV/AIDS on bulletin boards and in local newsletters.
- Organize a community meeting. Invite educators, faith and business leaders, health care professionals, neighbors, and friends to talk about HIV/AIDS and its impact locally. Even if three people show up, change can happen!
- Help someone living with HIV/AIDS by being a friend.
- Help end the stigma associated with AIDS.
- Implement an activity to support HIV/AIDS observances such as World AIDS Day on December 1 or National HIV Testing Day on June 27. Visit [www.omhrc.gov/hiv/aidsobservances](http://www.omhrc.gov/hiv/aidsobservances) for more ideas.

## To Learn More

- Visit the CDC National Prevention Information Network at [www.cdcnpin.org](http://www.cdcnpin.org) or call 1-800-458-5231.
- Visit the HIV/AIDS Observance Days Web site at [www.omhrc.gov/hivaidsobservances](http://www.omhrc.gov/hivaidsobservances).
- Call the National AIDS Hotline at 800-342-AIDS (Spanish 800-344-SIDA, TTY 800-243-7889).
  - Call your doctor or other health care provider.
    - Contact your local or state public health department.