



WHITMAN-WALKER CLINIC

HIV/AIDS and Substance Use

Substance users are at high risk for HIV due to the potential for spreading the infection through needles used to take drugs and because of high-risk behaviors that substance use increases, such as unprotected sex.

- As of December 2007, 31 percent of the 1,051,875 cumulative AIDS cases in the United States involved injection drug use.
- Among cumulative AIDS cases, IDU was responsible for infecting 175,704 males and 80,155 females
- IDU is the second most common exposure category for men with AIDS, accounting for 20 percent of total AIDS cases among men.
- In women, 35 percent of AIDS cases have been caused by injection drug use.
- IDU is responsible for 30 percent of AIDS cases among African-Americans and 31 percent among Hispanics, in comparison to 12 percent of cases among whites.
- Highest AIDS incidence related to substance use is found among white women (40 percent), African-American women (33 percent), Latina women (35 percent) and American Indian/Alaska Native women (40 percent).
- People use condoms less frequently when using drugs or alcohol.
 - In a study of 4,159 students only 47 percent reported using condoms when using drugs or alcohol, compared to 60 percent among students who did not use drugs or alcohol.

The spread of drug use over particular populations can help raise HIV risk levels across all populations

- Prisoners are especially at risk as an estimated 25 percent of these people have used needles to inject drugs and engage in unsafe behaviors.
- Native Americans and African-Americans reported the highest prevalence of substance use, 10 percent and 7.7 percent, respectively. Whites and Latinos reported substance use around 6.7 percent, compared to Asian/Pacific Islanders at 3.2 percent.

Sources:
Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Surveillance Report, Vol. 19