

After Years of Decline, New HIV Cases in NYC Rose in 2023

The 7.6% uptick in HIV diagnoses in NYC is likely due to increased testing after a dip during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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More New Yorkers were newly diagnosed with [HIV](#) in 2023 compared with 2022, but public officials say that doesn't necessarily mean new diagnoses are on the rise after years of steady decline, according to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DOHMH) [2023 HIV Surveillance Annual Report](#).

In 2023, 1,686 people were newly diagnosed with HIV in [New York City](#), up 7.6% from 2022.

Although the number of HIV [diagnoses](#) increased in 2023, the estimated number of new infections decreased by 17%, from 1,347 in 2022 to 1,122 in 2023, suggesting that more existing infections were diagnosed. Some experts attribute the uptick to an increase in testing for sexually transmitted infections ([STIs](#)) after a dip in testing and care during the [COVID-19](#) pandemic.

According to the report, the sociodemographic distributions were similar to those observed over the last five years. Of those newly diagnosed:

- 42% were Latino, and 41% were Black;
- 79% were men, 18% were women, 3% were transgender women and less than 1% were transgender men;
- 67% were between 20 and 29 years old, and 14% were ages 50 and older;
- 39% lived in ZIP codes with high or very high poverty levels at the time of diagnosis.

"The increase in new diagnoses may be related to increased engagement in [HIV testing](#) and

[sexual health care](#)—both among people who had not previously engaged in health care in some time as a result of COVID-19 and our response efforts and among people who were engaging for the first time in New York City’s robust HIV testing and sexual health care systems,” DOHMH deputy press secretary Chantal Gomez [told City Limits](#).

Despite advancements in HIV prevention and treatment, many people still lack [access to care](#). In fact, the report found that progress on improving HIV care outcomes in New York City remained over the past five years.

Testing is vital to ending the HIV epidemic. Approximately 13% of people living with HIV in the United States don’t know they have the virus, [according to HIV.gov](#).

People who are aware they have HIV can get connected to [care and treatment](#). Those who achieve and maintain [viral suppression](#) experience slower disease progression, enjoy better overall health and are less likely to develop opportunistic illnesses. What’s more, people with an undetectable viral load don’t transmit HIV to others through sex (dubbed treatment as prevention or [Undetectable Equals Untransmittable](#), or U=U).

Of nearly 88,500 people with HIV in New York City in 2023, 80% had a suppressed viral load, according to the report. What’s more, from 2019 to 2023, linkage to HIV care among those newly diagnosed in the city increased slightly from 78% to 80%.

Still, advocates emphasize that communities with higher rates of new HIV diagnoses need to improve access to care and prevention.

“We at the health department, and certainly our partners, are conscious of and talking about the need to really redouble efforts to get HIV and sexual health services back on the minds of New Yorkers, remind them that the infrastructure exists, that services are available,” Sarah Braunstein, PhD, MPH, assistant commissioner for the Bureau of Hepatitis, HIV and STIs, [told Gothamist](#).

To read the complete annual report, [click here](#).