



Farmworkers and HIV Risk

Facts:

- There are approximately two million hired agricultural workers in this country.
- Given the absence of national data on HIV infection rates among farmworkers, we do not know how many are infected, but useful inferences may be drawn from statistics collected on Hispanics in the United States since 83% of farmworkers self-identify as Hispanic.
 - Latinos are disproportionately impacted by the epidemic.
 - In 2009, Latinos represented about 16% of the total U.S. population and accounted for 20% of new infections that year.
 - The rate of new HIV infections among Latino men is more than twice that of White men, and among Latinas the rate is more than four times that of White women.

The Numbers:

Unfortunately, the vast majority of epidemiological data on HIV prevalence among farmworkers is based on small, local studies conducted more than a decade ago.

- In 1992, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found a prevalence rate of 5% among 310 farmworkers tested in Immokalee, Florida.
- A few other small studies have reported rates ranging from 0.47% to 13%.
- In order to effectively combat HIV and AIDS in the farmworker community there is an urgent need for more research.





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The Risks:

HIV and AIDS take an especially heavy toll on the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in U.S. society.

- Farmworkers contend with poverty, low income, limited education, substandard housing, and limited access to health care -- all factors associated with increased rates of HIV infection in any given population.
- Farmworkers' isolation, status as recent immigrants, and migration for work contribute to low acculturation, which in turn indirectly influences many HIV risk factors.
 - An increased likelihood of multiple sex partners for Latino men
 - Low rates of condom use among Latinas
 - Less use of testing and health services
 - Increased depression which may lead to elevated rates of alcohol and substance use (which often leads to risky sexual behavior)
 - Increased likelihood of patronage of or employment as sex workers.
- Farmworkers, few of whom are covered by health insurance, also have limited access to essential health care and HIV prevention information and services.

Additional Resources:

Farmworker Justice: www.farmworkerjustice.org
Resources on HIV and farmworkers

Harvesting Justice: www.harvestingjustice.org
Farmworker Justice blog on health, immigration, HIV, etc.

Locate an HIV Testing Site: www.hivtest.org
Find the nearest HIV site

AIDS.gov
Comprehensive government information on HIV and AIDS

CDC HIV Website: www.CDC.gov/hiv

