

most frequent exposure category (60%). Injecting drug use was second for females at 30% of cases.

Among blacks, MSM accounted for about half of cases (51%), compared with nearly three-quarters of cases among whites. IDU accounted for one-fifth of cases among blacks, but only 8% among whites.

HIV transmission associated with contaminated blood products was generally a minor risk factor for persons diagnosed with AIDS who are racial minorities. But this mode of transmission of HIV did approach heterosexual sex as a risk factor in AIDS cases among whites.

Overall, men having sex with men was the exposure risk for 64% of AIDS cases for the period, 1982-1995. Injecting drug use represented 13% of cumulative AIDS cases; MSM and IDU another 8%. Heterosexual sex with an HIV-infected partner was attributed to 10% of AIDS cases, blood product contamination to 3%, and unidentified transmission to 2%. Occupational exposures are almost non-existent.

AIDS cases in Tennessee are profiled in this report according to the four main high risk exposure categories -- men having sex with men (MSM), injecting drug use (IDU), cases with both MSM and IDU exposure, and cases of heterosexual transmission.

5.6.1. AIDS Cases Among Men Who Have Sex with Men

Blacks comprised an increasingly larger proportion of persons diagnosed with AIDS involving men having sex with men; they represented 30% of all cases between 1982 and 1995, but 41% in 1995.

The largest proportion of MSM cases fell in the five-year age-group, 30-34 cumulatively, and the 35-39 age-group in 1995.

MSM cases represented three-quarters of AIDS cases in Knox County and 67-68% in Davidson and Hamilton Counties. Of all regions, Northwest Tennessee had the lowest relative percentage of MSM AIDS cases as a percentage of all AIDS cases, at 51%.

5.6.2. AIDS Cases Among Injecting Drug Users

Persons with AIDS whose risk was injecting drug use (IDU) were much more likely to be male than female. However, among females, IDU represented a higher proportion of diagnosed cases. IDUs were also more likely to be black -- 60% of all cases attributed to IDU were among blacks, compared to 37% among whites and 2.5% among other races.