

# Bloodborne Infection – Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

## Why Is This Important?

HIV is a virus that affects the immune system. Without treatment, HIV can progress to a symptomatic, life-threatening acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). HIV transmission occurs through exposure to blood and body fluids from an HIV-infected person, including blood, semen, vaginal fluids, and breast milk. An HIV positive mother can pass the virus to her baby before or during childbirth, or through breastfeeding.

In the early stages many people with HIV infection have no symptoms. In Canada it is estimated that one in four people currently infected do not know they are HIV positive.<sup>1</sup> With treatment, HIV is now managed as a chronic disease, allowing HIV positive individuals who are on antiretroviral treatment to live long and healthy lives.

## What Is Being Done?

[What's Being Done in Saskatoon Health Region to Reduce STIs and Bloodborne Illness?](#)

[Saskatchewan and Regional HIV Strategies](#)

[HIV Front Line](#)

## To Learn More:

Chief Medical Health Officer's [Call to Action](#)

[Maggie's Story \(YouTube\)](#): a personal story of HIV by an individual living in our Region.

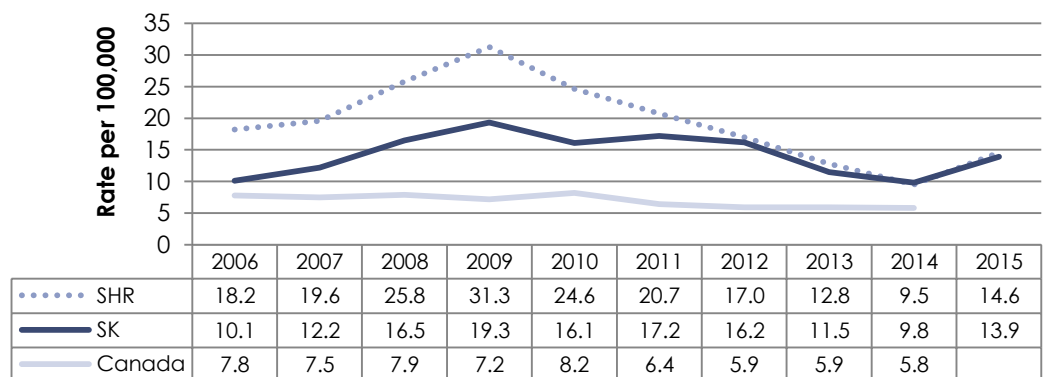
[HIV Report](#)

## Highlights

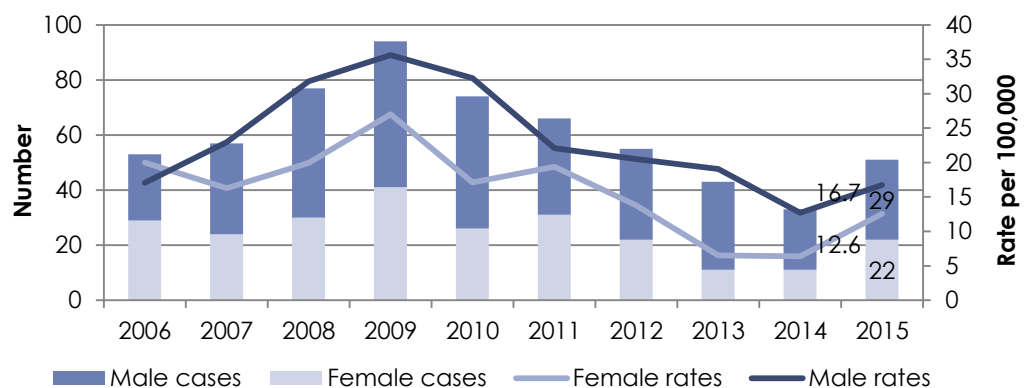
### After a steady decrease HIV increased in 2015.

- HIV rates increased in Saskatoon Health Region between 2004 to 2009, peaking at 31.3 per 100,000 population in 2009, more than four times the national rate (Figure 1).
- HIV cases totaled 51 in 2015, with 29 cases in males and 22 in females (Figure 2).
- The Region's 2015 HIV rate increased by 57% to 14.6 per 100,000 from the previous year. The increase has been attributed to more testing in the Region.
- Rates vary by age group, with the highest rates in the 30 to 39 year-old age group for both genders. See [case and rates by gender and age group](#).
- The primary HIV transmission risk in 2015 was injection drug use. Unprotected heterosexual sex and sex between men were the next highest risks. See [HIV transmission risks](#).
- A total of 600 confirmed cases of HIV have been reported in our Region since 2006 (not shown). Sixteen percent (95) of these individuals are now deceased (cause of death not necessarily HIV-related). See [About the Data](#).
- Since 2006, 103 cases of AIDS have been reported (not shown). Forty-five percent are deceased.
- It is estimated that of the 600 individuals diagnosed with HIV since 2006, 65% have been infected with hepatitis C (not shown).

**Figure 1: HIV Rates per 100,000 Population, Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatchewan, and Canada, 2006 to 2015**



**Figure 2: HIV Cases and Rates per 100,000 by Gender, Saskatoon Health Region, 2006 to 2015**



Source: iPHIS