



Sexually Transmitted Diseases: A Continuing Problem

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'Sexually transmitted diseases are a continuing problem among the young... More public education and surveillance are needed to prevent transmission of these infections.'

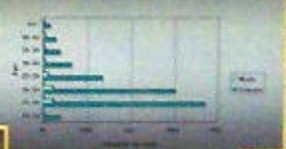
Introduction

Sexually transmitted diseases continue to be an important public health problem throughout the world. In the United States, Chlamydia trachomatis and Neisseria gonorrhoeae are the most common bacterial causes of sexually transmitted diseases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 500,000 cases of gonorrhea and 4 million Chlamydia infections occur in the U.S. each year. The estimated overall cost of these infections and the problems they cause exceeds \$2 billion a year.

Methods

Detection of *C. trachomatis* and *N. gonorrhoeae* from genital specimens was determined using a nucleic acid hybridization technique (GEN-PROBE PROCT-YSTING). Positive test results from all regions (total) period, July 1999 through December 2000, were obtained from the computerized results of the clinical laboratory and were grouped according to age.

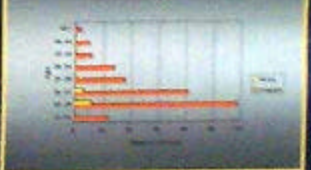
C. trachomatis cases



N. gonorrhoeae cases



Deaf infection cases



Results

100% (6/6%) of the 10,201 tests for *C. trachomatis* were positive. Of the positive results 302 (4.2%) were from female patients and the highest rates were seen in women 15 to 24 years old. Positive tests for *N. gonorrhoeae* were found in 302 (3.7%) of the 10,001 tests performed. Of the positive results 528 (3.3%) were from female patients and 267 (2.0%) were from male patients. Deaf infections were found in 137 females and 10 male patients.

Conclusion

The data indicate that sexually transmitted diseases are a continuing problem, particularly among young (< 30 years), sexually active individuals and is associated with other risk factor behaviors. The lack of diagnosis, therapy and monitoring from doctors poses a considerable burden on the health care system. We suggest that more public education and surveillance be needed to prevent transmission of these infections.