



Highlights

- Gonorrhea cases have sharply increased 52% between 2017 and 2018
- More females (54%) than males (46%) are found positive for gonorrhea, often due to increased screening
- American Indians make up 38% of all reported gonorrhea cases. This is also influenced by increased screening in this population.
- Nearly two-thirds of persons with gonorrhea were offered an HIV test and almost 30% were tested for HIV.
- Providers should follow the CDC's STD treatment Guidelines to appropriately treat patients and contacts.
<https://www.cdc.gov/std/tg2015/default.htm>

Visit www.GetTested.MT.gov to find STD testing sites that offer affordable screening and treatment for both men and women.

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* bacteria that can infect both men and women. Urethral infections caused by gonorrhea among men can produce symptoms that cause them to seek treatment soon enough to prevent sequelae, but often not soon enough to prevent transmission to others. Gonorrhea can also infect the mucus membranes of the mouth, throat, eyes and rectum and testing of those sites may be appropriate. Among women, infections are commonly asymptomatic or might not produce recognizable symptoms until complications (e.g., PID or pelvic inflammatory disease) have occurred. PID can result in tubal scarring that can lead to infertility and ectopic pregnancy. In addition, epidemiologic and biologic studies provide strong evidence that gonorrhea infections facilitate the transmission of HIV.

The incidence rate of gonorrhea in Montana was relatively stable until 2012, when the rate increased from 10.7 to 84.9 per 100,000. After the number of cases leveling off between 2015 and 2017, it is projected that the number of gonorrhea cases will increase by over 50% in 2018. The increase in the number of

gonorrhea cases in Montana mirrors national STD trends and the 2018 Montana rate of 113 per 100,000 remains lower than the 2017 US rate of 171.9 per 100,000.

Figure 1. Number of GC cases - Montana, 2008-2018*

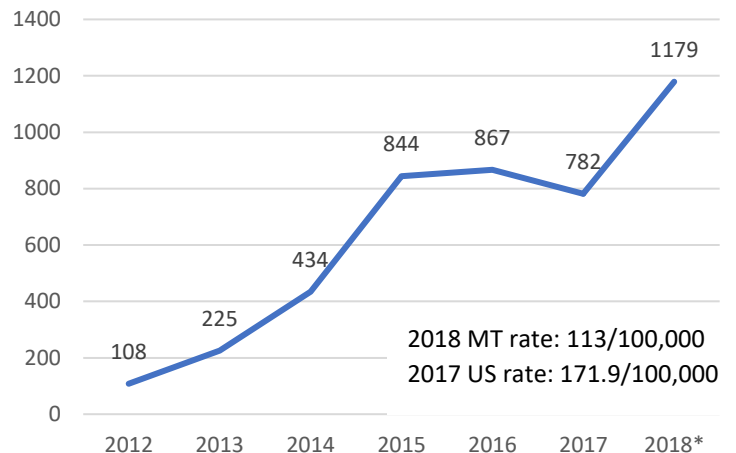
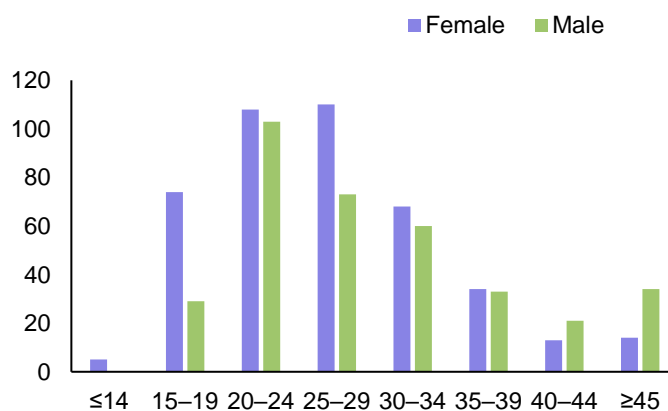


Figure 2. Number of gonorrhea cases by sex and age — Montana, 2018*

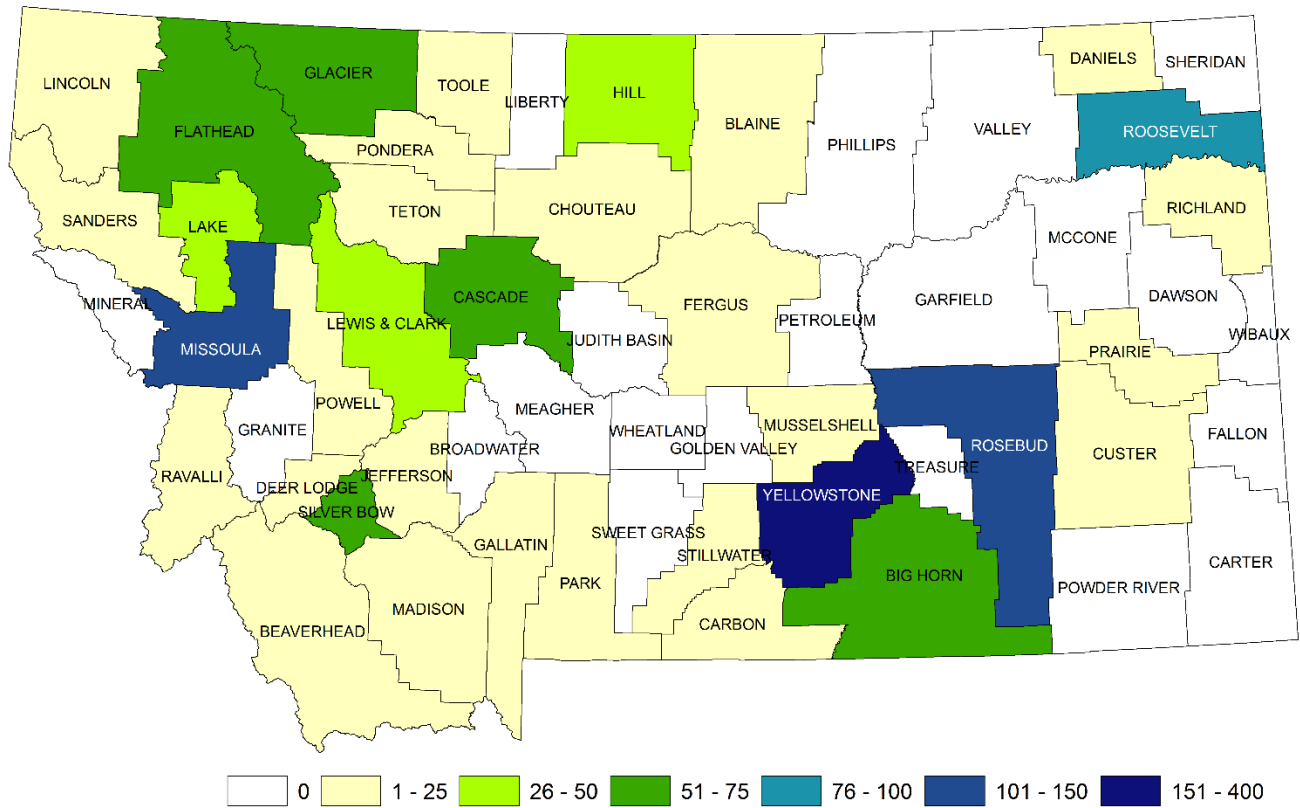


As the second most frequently reported STD in Montana, gonorrhea is commonly seen in young people ages 15-24 years.

Women are more likely to be diagnosed with gonorrhea, but this may be influenced by increased screening practices.

The map below shows the demographic distribution of gonorrhea cases in 2018. Gonorrhea cases are not evenly distributed among Montana's counties. Yellowstone (33%), Rosebud (10%) and Missoula (9%) counties accounted for more than half of all cases during 2018.

Figure 3. Gonorrhea cases by county, 2018*



Gonorrhea can be cured with the correct treatment. CDC recommends dual therapy, or using two drugs, to treat gonorrhea – a single dose of 250mg of intramuscular ceftriaxone AND 1g of oral azithromycin. This is done because of increasing concerns over antimicrobial resistance to treatment. Public health staff in Montana follow up with patients and providers to identify partners, so they have an opportunity to be tested for gonorrhea, as well as ensuring they receive the appropriate treatment to cure the disease. In 2018, 91% of GC cases were interviewed for partners and 96% of those with known treatment information were appropriately treated per CDC guidelines.

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*2018 includes provisional data. Source: Montana Infectious Disease Information System