

# Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) in Nunavut, 2011-2018

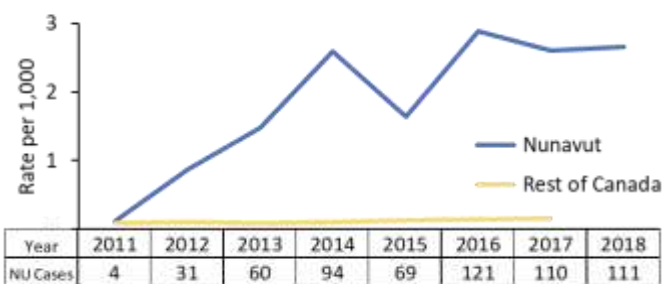


Sexual health is an important part of overall health and well-being. Sexually Transmitted Diseases or Infections spread through person-to-person sexual contact. They are often preventable and treatable, although they can cause serious health issues. This report provides overall trends of common STIs in Nunavut from 2011-2018 with a focus on 2018.

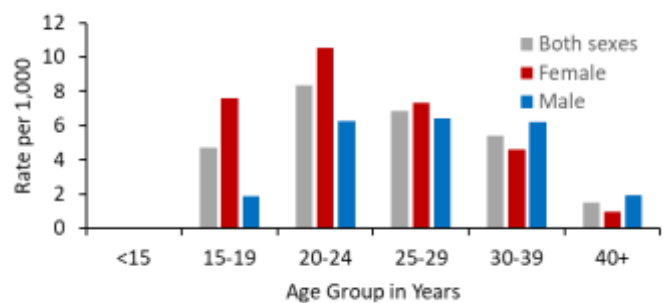
## SYPHILIS

Syphilis is a bacterial infection and has been on the rise throughout Canada. Although many may not show symptoms, some people who are infected can develop sores around the genitals or a body rash. Without treatment, it can cause serious damage to the heart, brain, and other organs, and can lead to death. Syphilis can also be passed from an infected pregnant woman to her baby during pregnancy or at delivery, causing “congenital syphilis” in babies. An infection can be detected by a blood test and be treated with an appropriate antibiotic.

Rates<sup>1</sup> of Syphilis in Nunavut vs Rest of Canada



2018 Syphilis Rates<sup>2</sup> in Nunavut by Age and Sex



### Nunavut Summary in 2018:

- Syphilis used to be very rare in Nunavut, but the outbreak that began in 2012 continues with 111 reported infections in 2018. The overall rate of reported infections is comparable between females and males with the highest infection rate is reported among the 20-24 age group.
- No congenital syphilis has been reported in 2018.

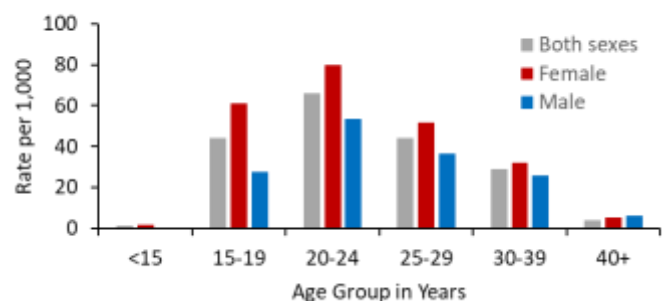
## GONORRHEA

Gonorrhea is a bacterial infection. Gonorrhea has similar symptoms and long-term health effects as chlamydia. Often people cannot tell if they have gonorrhea but can still pass on the infection to others. An infection can be detected by a urine test and be treated with an appropriate antibiotic.

### Nunavut Summary in 2018:

- Gonorrhea is the second most commonly reported with over 732 reported infections in 2018, of which nearly 60% were females.
- Chlamydia and Gonorrhea show similar trends, overall.

2018 Gonorrhea Rates<sup>2</sup> in Nunavut by Age and Sex

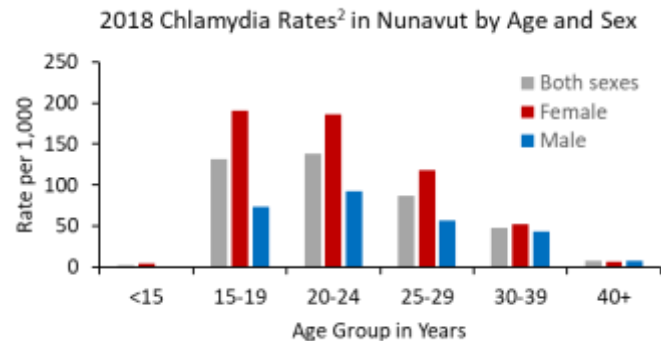
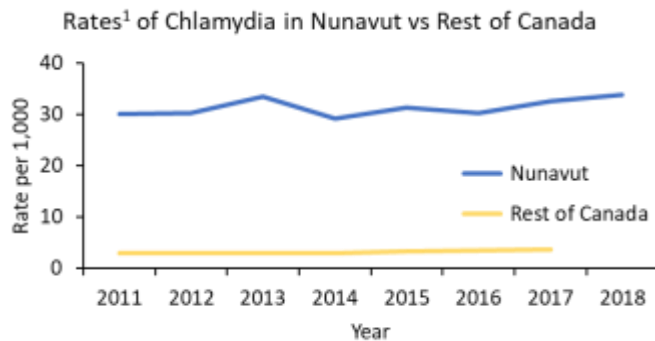


<sup>1</sup> Age-standardized to 2011 Canadian population.

<sup>2</sup> Crude rates in Nunavut in 2018

## CHLAMYDIA

Chlamydia is a bacterial infection. Many people with chlamydia do not show any symptoms but can still pass the infection on to others. Some people may have unusual discharge, burning when urinating (“peeing”), and pain during sexual activity. Without treatment, it can cause serious long-term health problems such as lower abdominal pain, testicular pain, infertility and sterility (unable to have children). An infection can be detected by a urine test and be treated with an appropriate antibiotic.



### Nunavut Summary in 2018:

- Chlamydia continues to be the most commonly reported STI with 1,519 new reported infections in 2018, of which 65% were females.
- High rates of infection are seen among the 20-24 age group, closely followed by 15-19 age group. These two age groups account for more than 50% of all reported infections.
- The overall rate of reported infections is nearly 2 times higher in females as compared to males. This may be partly due to females being more likely to be affected by the complications of untreated infections and prenatal screening contributing to a greater chance of detection and treatment of infection among younger females.

### National Summary of STIs:

- Chlamydia is the most commonly reported STI in Canada followed by gonorrhea and syphilis.
- New diagnoses of all 3 STIs are on the rise across Canada.
- From 2011 to 2017, the rates of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and infectious syphilis have increased by 17%, 128% and 93% respectively.
- The number of congenital syphilis, in particular, is the highest ever reported (17 cases in 2018) in 25 years.

## I Respect Myself

- Protect yourself and others; but most importantly respect yourself and your body.
- Use a condom when you have sex to reduce the risk of getting or spreading STIs.
- Get a free test at your Community Health Centre, if you:
  - have symptoms
  - think you had unprotected sex or had sex while drunk or high
  - start a new relationship, or don't know your partner's sexual history
- Get tested regularly, every 3-6 months, if you or your partner have more than one sexual partner.
- For more information, visit [www.irespectmyself.ca](http://www.irespectmyself.ca), ask your Community Health Representative, or go to your local health centre or public health.

<sup>1</sup> Age-standardized to 2011 Canadian population.

<sup>2</sup> Crude rates in Nunavut in 2018