

MURC Data Snapshot

Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Rates in the Southern Region of the United States

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Problem

Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) rates (i.e., Chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis) surged nationally in 2021, with the trend being more pronounced in the South. The table below (CDC, 2024) ranks U.S. states in five categories of sexually transmitted diseases. Mississippi and Louisiana consistently report most of the highest STD rates nationwide (Kolmar, 2024).

Frequencies of Top 5 Highest STD Rates in the U.S. by State

| Rank | Syphilis(P&S) | Syphilis (Congenital) | Gonorrhea | Chlamydia | HIV |
|------|---------------|--------------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1 | South Dakota | South Dakota | Alaska | Louisiana | Georgia |
| 2 | New Mexico | New Mexico | Louisiana | Mississippi | Florida |
| 3 | Mississippi | Mississippi | Georgia | Alaska | Louisiana |
| 4 | Arkansas | Arizona | South Dakota | Alabama | Nevada |
| 5 | Alabama | Texas | Mississippi | Georgia | Texas |

Key Findings:

- Geographic and demographic factors play a critical role in STD prevalence rates.
- Targeted interventions need to be expanded in the U.S. southern region as a model for effectively reducing STD rates in the United States.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2025). HIV Surveillance Report: HIV Diagnoses, Deaths, and Prevalence, 2023. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv-data/nhss/hiv-diagnoses-deaths-and-prevalence-2025.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024). Announcing Sexually Transmitted Infections Surveillance, 2023. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. <https://www.cdc.gov/sti/php/from-the-director/announcing-sti-surveillance-2023.html>.

Kolmar, C. (2023). STD rates by state in the United States for 2023. HomeSnacks. <https://www.homesnacks.com/std-rates-by-state/>.