

Gonorrhoea (genital)

As is the case for genital chlamydia infection, only a portion of genital gonorrhoea infections are asymptomatic and as a result, the infection is under-diagnosed and under-reported. If untreated, genital gonorrhoea may lead to complications such as pelvic inflammatory disease (a major cause of infertility, ectopic pregnancy, and chronic pain) in women and epididymitis and prostatitis in men.

Rates of genital gonorrhoea have been increasing since the late 1990s across Canada. However, from 2014 to 2015, there was a 70% increase in the rate of gonorrhoea in British Columbia resulting in the highest number of cases reported in over a decade. The number of gonorrhoea cases reached an all-time high in 2016, yet remains effectively unchanged since 2015. In 2016, 20-24 year olds had the highest rates among females, with 25-29 years old having the highest rates in males. The diagnosis rate of gonorrhoea among men is approximately twice that among females which is partially due to the greater likelihood that males infected with gonorrhoea will have symptoms. Gonorrhoea is also more likely to be concentrated in sexually active

networks; higher rates of gonorrhoea among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men contribute, in part, to higher overall rates in males. While provincial surveillance data do not permit identification of cases among gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men, this has been observed in other jurisdictions.

Reasons for the overall gonorrhoea increase are being investigated, but could include changes to both testing frequency and testing methods or be due to differences in the prevalent gonorrhoea strain. The BCCDC is collaborating with the provincial laboratory and the National Microbiology Laboratory (NML) to investigate reasons for the dramatic increase in gonorrhoea cases.

For more information on gonorrhoea, please see the [STI Annual Report](#).



19.1 Genital Gonorrhoea Rates by Year, 2007-2016

