



Increase in HIV Perinatal Transmissions in Maryland

**Center for HIV Surveillance, Epidemiology and Evaluation
Prevention and Health Promotion Administration (PHPA)**

December 6, 2022

Mission and Vision

MISSION

The mission of the Prevention and Health Promotion Administration is to protect, promote and improve the health and well-being of all Marylanders and their families through provision of public health leadership and through community-based public health efforts in partnership with local health departments, providers, community-based organizations, and public and private sector agencies, giving special attention to at-risk and vulnerable populations.

VISION

The Prevention and Health Promotion Administration envisions a future in which all Marylanders and their families enjoy optimal health and well-being.

Center for HIV Surveillance, Epidemiology and Evaluation

- The collection of information for the HIV Case Surveillance Program (funded by CDC) is required and specified by Maryland law
 - Clinical facilities and laboratories are required to report all HIV and AIDS diagnoses and HIV-related test results via provider and laboratory reports
- Data informs prevention and service programs

Perinatal HIV Surveillance

- Extension of routine HIV/AIDS surveillance activities and is managed in the HIV/AIDS Reporting System (eHARS)
- Providers are required by law to report perinatal exposures within 48 hours to the health department using the morbidity report form (DHMH 1140)
- Medical records of all HIV exposed infants are reviewed up to 18 months of age until status is determined

Definitions

- *Reported Perinatal HIV Exposures*

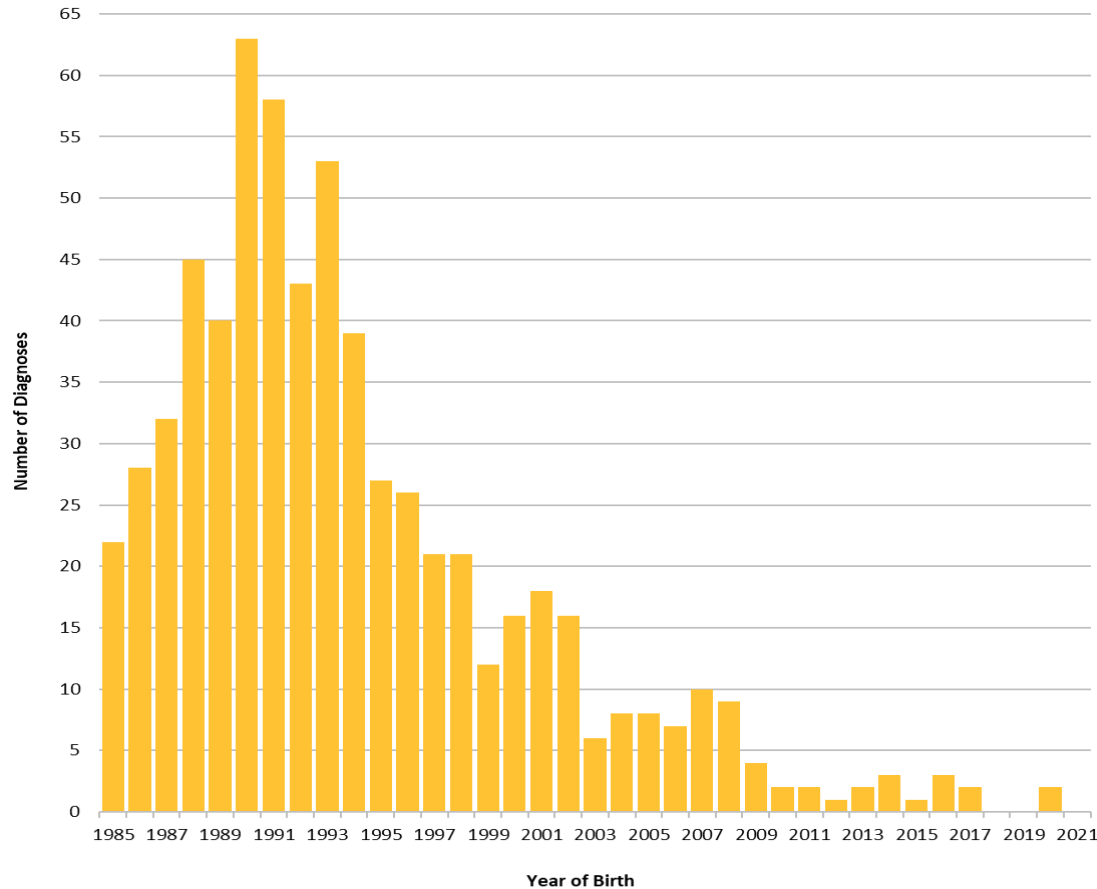
Reported babies born to a person of childbearing age (13-49 years old) with childbearing potential living with HIV during the specified year, with a residence of Maryland at time of birth

- *Perinatal Transmission*

When HIV is passed from a person with childbearing potential living with HIV to the baby during pregnancy, childbirth (also called labor and delivery), or breastfeeding (through breast milk)

Perinatal HIV Transmissions are Rare

Pediatric Reported HIV Diagnoses



2021

156 exposures

0 transmissions

2016-2020

6 transmissions



Five New Cases Since July

- Four confirmed transmissions in babies born in 2022
- One confirmed transmission in a young child born several years earlier
- Born in multiple jurisdictions
- Investigations indicate:
 - Late initiation of prenatal care (4)
 - Late or no initiation of HIV antiretroviral therapy (ART) (4)
 - Mental health issues (3)
 - History of STIs (2)
 - Substance use (2)

Transmission Risks

- Risk of perinatal HIV transmission is <1% in persons with HIV who initiate ART prior to conception and have sustained viral suppression to undetectable levels throughout pregnancy
- Many pregnant persons are not diagnosed with HIV until they are tested during the pregnancy
- Impact of COVID on access to HIV testing and care-related services has been a concern
- Risk of perinatal transmission increases when pregnant persons have limited prenatal care
- Pregnant people can be unaware of their HIV status and their partner's status
- Substance use among pregnant persons can increase risk

Treatment Guidelines

- HIV testing is the standard of care for all pregnant persons
- In Maryland, HIV testing must be offered during both the first and third trimesters, and again at labor and deliver if there is no indication of a test prior to delivery
- All pregnant persons should receive HIV treatment as soon as possible and throughout the pregnancy

Health Officer Memo



HEALTH OFFICER MEMORANDUM

[CONFIDENTIAL & SUBJECT TO EXECUTIVE PRIVILEGE]

To: Health Officers **HO Memo # 22-033**
Deputy Health Officers
Communicable Disease Directors
Communicable Disease Staff
Immunization Coordinators
Nursing Directors

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Re: Increase in Perinatal HIV Transmissions in Maryland

Date: November 28, 2022

The purpose of this notice is to alert the provider community of a recent increase in perinatal HIV transmission in Maryland. The Maryland Department of Health is investigating five recent reports of confirmed perinatal HIV infection. Perinatal HIV transmissions are rare in Maryland. There were 156 confirmed perinatal HIV exposures and zero cases of perinatal HIV infections in babies born in Maryland during 2021. Over the five-year period from 2016-2020, there were six confirmed transmissions. Since July 2022, four babies from different jurisdictions in the state have acquired HIV through perinatal transmission and a fifth perinatal HIV infection

- HO Memo # 22-033, November 28, 2022
- Additional information and links to resources are available in Health Officer Memorandum



Strategies to Reduce Transmissions

- Encourage routine HIV testing in individuals ages 13 and above
- Communicate the importance of preconception and prenatal care for healthy babies
- Test pregnant persons for HIV, syphilis, hepatitis, and other infectious diseases
- Identify acute HIV infection during pregnancy
- Promote infectious disease testing for all partners
- Ensure access to care and supportive services

LHD Recommendations

- Promote routine screening in clinical and nonclinical settings
- Encourage timely reporting of perinatal HIV exposures
- Support HIV perinatal service coordination

Resources

- Perinatal Clinical Guidelines
<https://clinicalinfo.hiv.gov/en/guidelines/perinatal/whats-new-guidelines>
- PrEP Guidelines
<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/clinicians/prevention/prep.html>
- PrEP services
<https://npin.cdc.gov/preplocator>
- Maryland regulations for HIV testing during pregnancy
<http://mdrules.elaws.us/comar/10.18.08.07>
- HIV exposure reporting
<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OIDEOR/CHSE/Pages/reporting-material.aspx>

Response Activities

- *MDH Internal Perinatal Workgroup*: Includes PHPA prevention, surveillance, health services, STI, Hepatitis, and harm reduction staff
 - Share data, discuss coordination, review case studies, and plan for the Perinatal Action Team
- *Maryland Perinatal Action Team*: Includes MDH, local health departments, hospitals, CBOs, OB-GYN clinics, and pediatric/adolescent clinics
 - Identify missed opportunities, addresses community action, target resources, and refine prevention strategies



Maryland

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Prevention and Health Promotion Administration

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