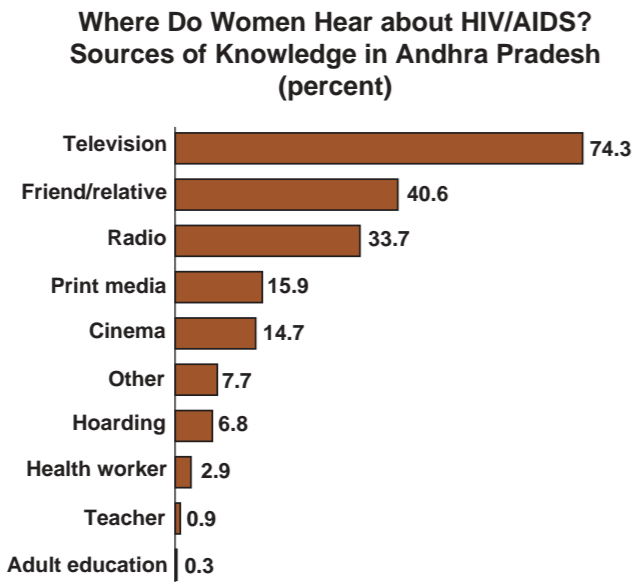


People Need HIV/AIDS Information

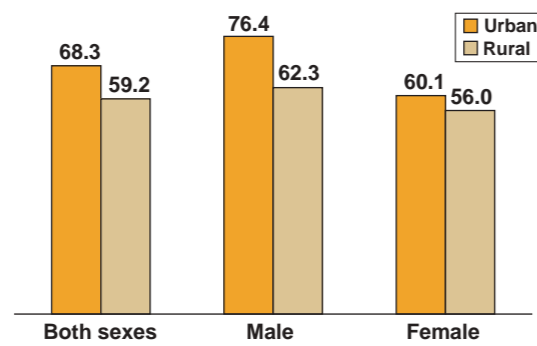
For people to take steps to avoid HIV/AIDS, they must first hear of it. In Andhra Pradesh, 96 percent of adults have heard of the disease, with high awareness in both urban and rural areas. Television is the most likely source of HIV/AIDS knowledge, followed by friends or relatives. Only 2.9 percent of ever-married women received information on the disease from a health worker.



National Family Health Survey, 1998-99 (survey of ever-married women, ages 15-49)

Awareness of the use of the condom as a means to prevent HIV/AIDS is far from universal. In the rural areas, about one-third of men and nearly half of women were not aware of its role in disease prevention.

Percent Knowing that Consistent Condom Use Can Prevent HIV/AIDS, Andhra Pradesh, 2001

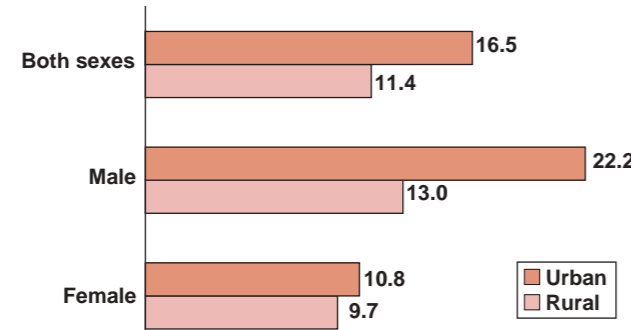


Behavioural Surveillance Survey 2001 National AIDS Control Organisation

Personal experience with the disease is widespread. Overall, 31.2 percent of BSS respondents knew of someone who had died of AIDS, 26.6 percent in urban areas and 32.8 percent in rural areas.

Accurate knowledge, testing and counseling are three main weapons in the struggle against HIV/AIDS...

Percent Knowing a Place Where They Could Be Tested for HIV/AIDS, Andhra Pradesh, 2001



Behavioural Surveillance Survey 2001 National AIDS Control Organisation

A small proportion felt it was possible to be tested confidentially for the disease but only 16.5 percent in urban areas and 11.4 percent in rural areas knew where to go for testing. Testing for HIV is not only in the individual's own self-interest, but would act as a strong deterrent to its spread.

What must be done?

- The stigma associated with people living with HIV/AIDS must be ended. Women and orphans are cast from families, children from their school and workers from their workplace. Ignorance breeds needless fear.
- Confidential testing centres must be made operational in every district. HIV/AIDS must be fought at the grass-roots level.
- Women are a vital target for information and testing, lest they be left defenceless.
- HIV/AIDS information — and counseling — must be universal. Everyone should know the truth about HIV/AIDS.
- People must learn that a single, uninfected partner is the best defence.
- Those who do engage in risky behaviour must learn the value of a high quality condom and how to obtain one.
- Treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS, including antiretroviral drugs, should be provided free of charge, given that the expense is beyond the reach of many.
- The importance of *quickly* educating youth is a key element in the campaign.

All the danger signs are there. Knowledge of the disease itself is low, the knowledge of preventive measures is far short of what is necessary and counseling is unavailable to many. HIV/AIDS has come to Andhra Pradesh and is now a genuine epidemic.

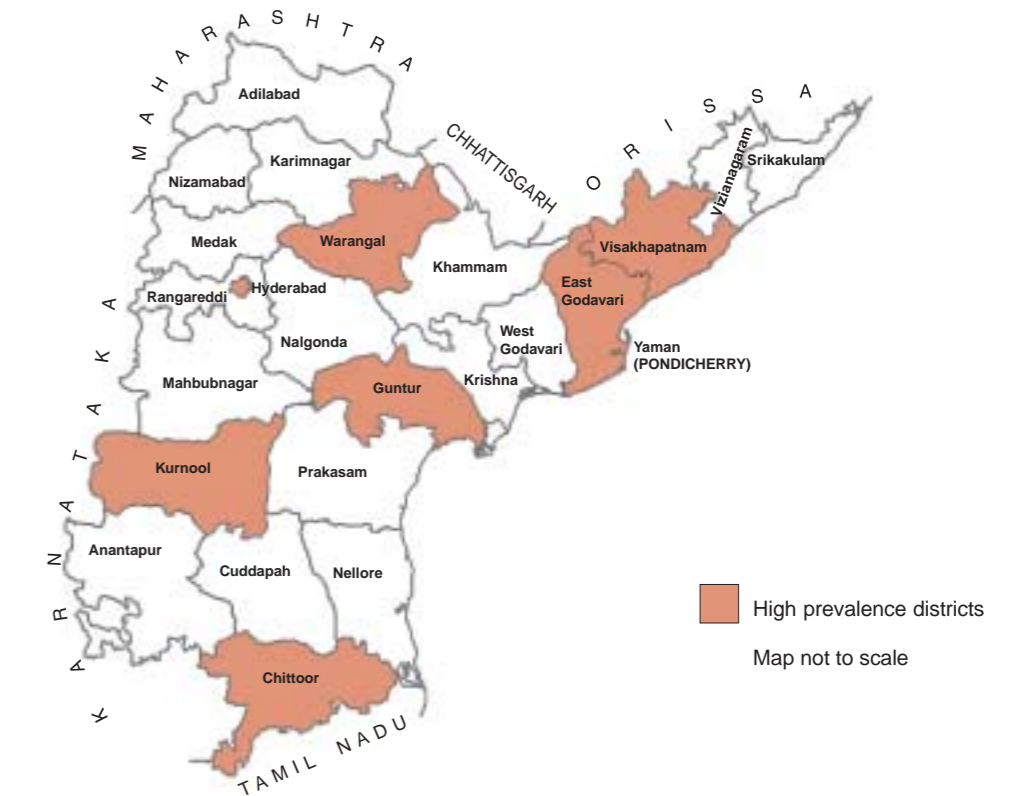
This series of factsheets on the six hard-hit HIV/AIDS states (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland and Tamil Nadu) are available in English and the respective state language and are free of charge to individuals and organisations. For additional copies, please contact the Population Foundation of India at the address below.

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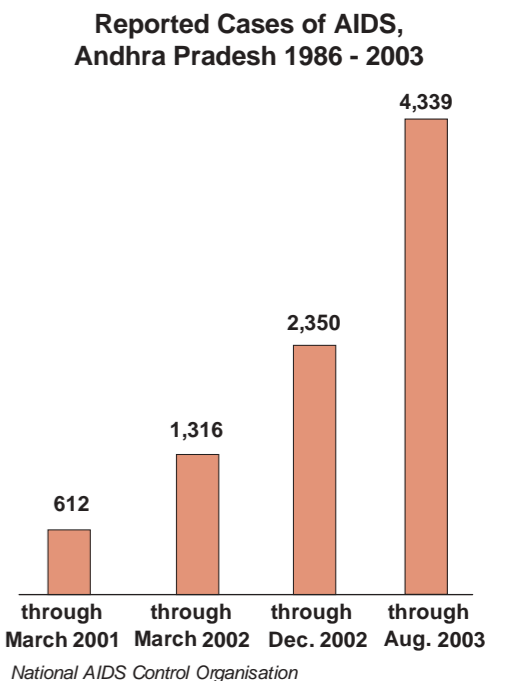
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Andhra Pradesh HIV/AIDS in India The Hard-hit States



Andhra Pradesh was one of the first states in India to be considered high HIV/AIDS prevalence and is currently one of the six "hard-hit" states. Through mid-2003, eight percent of the country's reported cases of AIDS was in Andhra Pradesh and the number of cases is rising rapidly. The state has the highest proportion of those with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) who have tested positive for HIV/AIDS. People suffering from STDs are far more vulnerable to HIV infection. But HIV/AIDS is no longer confined to those with risky sexual behaviour. It has now moved into the general population, signified by the number of women in antenatal clinics who also test positive for the disease. Accurate information on how to avoid the always-fatal disease — and the elimination of the stigma against its victims — can help the state stem the tide of the epidemic.



How Far Has AIDS Spread?

Officially reported AIDS cases from hospitals and clinics are only a small fraction of the total HIV/AIDS epidemic. However, the rise in reported cases from 612 in March 2001 to 4,339 through August 2003 shows that the disease is quickly gaining ground. Of those 4,339 cases, 1,989 were added in the first eight months of 2003 alone.

Among adults, males are infected 3:1 compared to females, but the number of females with HIV/AIDS is rising. About 90 percent of the total reported AIDS cases are in the age group 15-44.

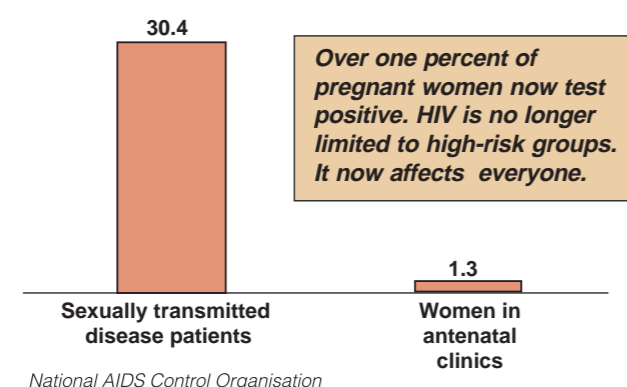
Measuring the Spread

In order to measure the extent of HIV infection, testing is conducted at "sentinel sites" among high and low-risk groups. High-risk groups are patients at sexually transmitted disease (STD) clinics while low-risk groups are women treated in antenatal clinics (ANCs).

The National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) classifies the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Andhra Pradesh as *high prevalence*, with five percent or more of high-risk groups and one percent or more of women in antenatal clinics testing positive. Rates for women in some clinics have now risen as high as four percent. That is a very high rate for women in the general population, who typically do not engage in risky sexual behaviour and whose chance of contracting HIV is considered low.

The sentinel site data show that the epidemic has now spread from high-risk groups to the general population. In Andhra Pradesh, the HIV/AIDS outbreak is a genuine epidemic.

Percent Testing Positive for HIV at Sentinel Sites, Andhra Pradesh, 2002

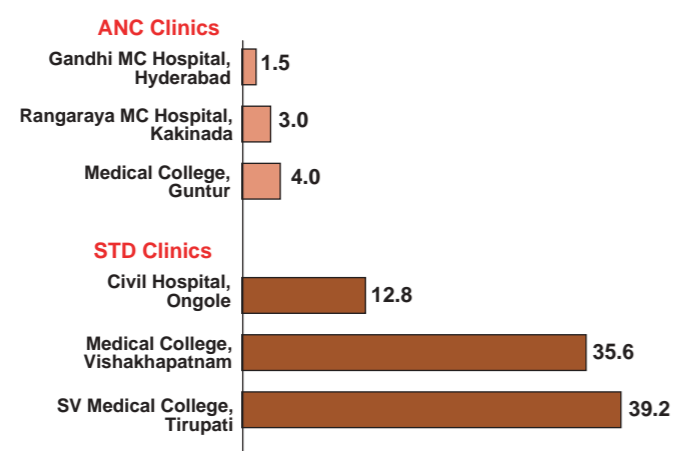


National AIDS Control Organisation

Over one percent of pregnant women now test positive. HIV is no longer limited to high-risk groups. It now affects everyone.

Of the 49 high prevalence HIV/AIDS districts in India, seven are in Andhra Pradesh...

Percent of Pregnant Women and STD Patients Testing Positive for HIV, Andhra Pradesh, 2002



National AIDS Control Organisation

A true AIDS epidemic is not a future possibility for Andhra Pradesh. It is a present reality...

Bridge Groups

The high rate of HIV infection among women in antenatal clinics indicates that the disease is being carried to the general population by a "bridge" group. Tragically, pregnant women can pass the infection to their unborn child or, after birth, by breastfeeding, an otherwise recommended practice.

Andhra Pradesh recorded the highest frequency of sex with non-regular partners in the country. Among men, 19.2 percent said they had had sex with a non-regular partner in the previous year, as did 7.4 percent of women.

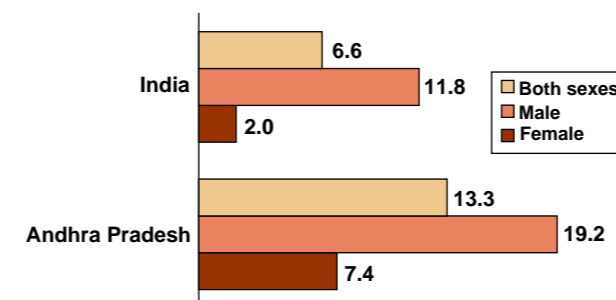
Added Risk with STDs

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) increase vulnerability to HIV infection. The Behavioural Surveillance Survey (BSS) 2001, conducted by NACO, showed that Andhra Pradesh had one of the highest levels of STD prevalence in India. More than 20 percent of STD patients in urban areas and 30 percent in rural areas tested positive for HIV. This is a serious public health issue as rural populations have less access to diagnosis and treatment.

The higher rate in rural areas requires greatly increased efforts for HIV education outside cities and towns. Reaching down to village panchayat leaders to convince them of the need to overcome the stigma associated with AIDS has become a critical need. People fear the stigma from even being tested, knowing they are likely to be ejected from their household, village or school.

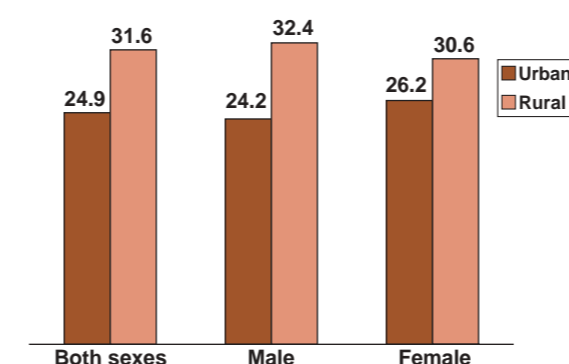
Bridge groups, such as husbands who use the services of sex workers, infect their wives with HIV, who then pass the disease to their babies. The epidemic is complete...

Percent of Adults Having Sex with a Non-regular Partner in the Past Year, India and Andhra Pradesh, 2001



Behavioural Surveillance Survey 2001
National AIDS Control Organisation

Percent of STD Patients Testing Positive for HIV in Urban and Rural Areas by Sex, Andhra Pradesh, 2001



National AIDS Control Organisation

Stigma: An Ally of AIDS

The fight against AIDS will fail if its stigma cannot be overcome. The fear of being stigmatized for simply being tested for the infection allows HIV/AIDS to spread undetected from person to person...

HIV Moves through Society

The occupation of STD patients who tested positive for HIV illustrates how the disease spreads, especially in the initial stages. Those with frequent contact with many customers or clients are more likely to contract the disease and then spread it to others.

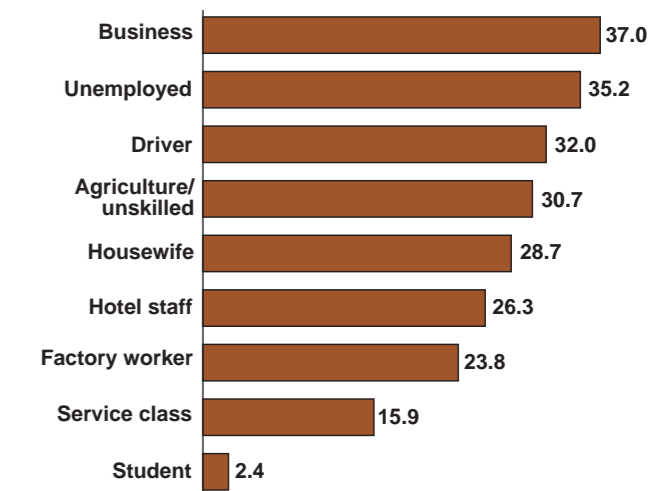
People from the business class have the highest prevalence of the STD patients tested in Andhra Pradesh. The unemployed form the second largest group in HIV infection. This group is often without work after migrating to larger towns and cities and becomes vulnerable to HIV. Truck drivers who travel distances to many locations bring the infection with them, often to areas where the disease has not yet begun.

A telling statistic is the high prevalence of HIV discovered among housewives at 28.7 percent. This high rate of infection is yet another signal of the expansion of HIV into the general public.

Condom Use Short of Goal

The best defence against HIV is a *single, uninfected partner*. When one's behaviour is risky, the primary defence is a high quality condom. Although condom use has increased, only 8.5 percent of clients of female sex workers in Peddapuram and 25.9 percent in Kakinada always use a condom. These are very low levels since even relatively high use of the condom is not enough. HIV will spread steadily with anything short of 100 percent use.

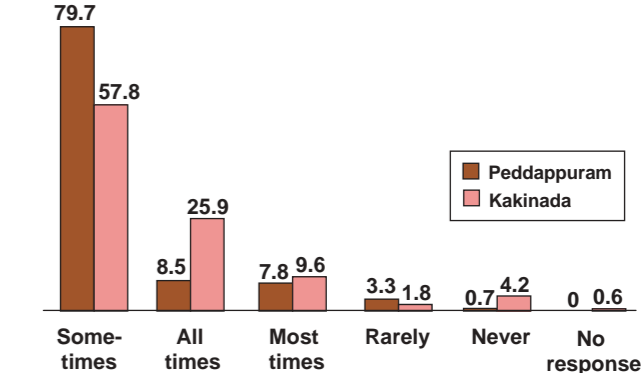
Percent Testing Positive for HIV at STD Sites by Occupation, Andhra Pradesh, 2001



National AIDS Control Organisation

The best defence against HIV/AIDS is a single, uninfected partner...

Reported Frequency of Condom Use by Clients of Sex Workers, Andhra Pradesh, 2001 (percent)



Andhra Pradesh State AIDS Control Society

Only 100 percent use of the condom with commercial sex workers can prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. Andhra Pradesh is far short of this goal...