# Syphilis Cases in England at Highest Level Since 1948, with Concerns over Rising STIs



According to recent data from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), cases of syphilis in England have reached their highest level since 1948. In 2023, there were 9,513 diagnosed cases of infectious syphilis. While the majority of these cases occurred among gay men, there was a significant 22% rise in diagnoses among heterosexual men and women, with 1,958 cases reported.

The overall number of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in England also saw an increase, with 401,800 new cases reported in 2023, a 4.7% rise from 2022. Gonorrhoea diagnoses reached a record high with 85,223 cases. Chlamydia remained the most common STI, accounting for nearly half of the total new cases, with 194,970 diagnoses.

The UKHSA noted that the impact of STIs is most significant among young people aged 15 to 24, gay men, and some minority ethnic groups. Dr. Hamish Mohammed from the UKHSA emphasized the importance of consistent condom use to reduce the risk of infection and highlighted the availability of free, confidential STI testing through the NHS.

The Local Government Association (LGA) has called for a 10-year sexual health strategy to address rising infection rates and ensure that sexual health services are adequately funded and resourced. David Fothergill of the LGA stressed the need for more people, especially from hard-to-reach communities, to visit local sexual health clinics.