



HIV among African, Caribbean and Black people in Ontario



Research on HIV and other sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections among African, Caribbean and Black (ACB) people in Canada has been relatively limited. Most studies have been concentrated in Ontario^a.

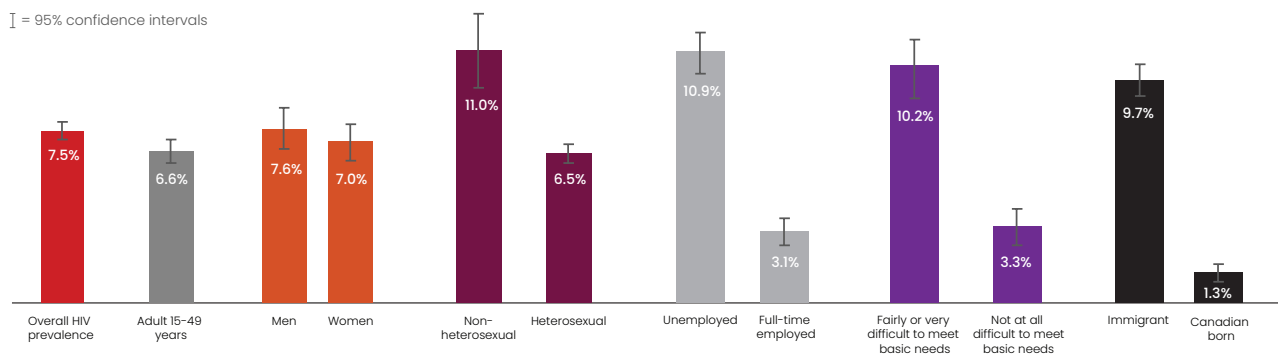
According to 2022 provincial data, 29.8% of first-time HIV diagnoses in Ontario^b were among ACB people^c. Most infections are acquired in Ontario^d.

A research study (the A/C study³) provided more insights about HIV among ACB people in Ontario. The A/C study was a community-based research project conducted among first and second generation self-identified Black people in Toronto and Ottawa in 2018–2019. It included a bio-behavioural survey (n=1,380 participants) and 12 focus group discussions (n=107 participants).

Social determinants of health play a role in the prevalence of HIV⁴

HIV prevalence^e among ACB people in Ontario according to selected social determinants of health

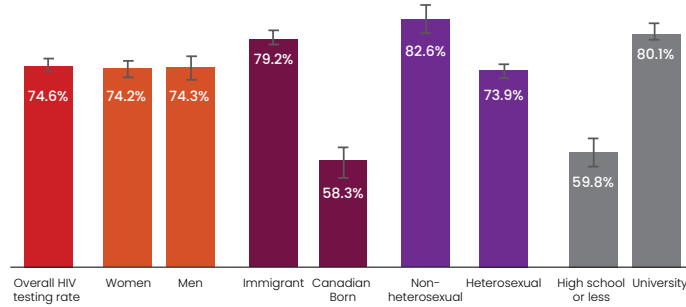
I = 95% confidence intervals



Self-reported HIV testing^d

Self-reported HIV testing rate (ever) among subgroups^e

I = 95% confidence intervals



35.0% tested in the last 6 months

Main barriers to testing³:

According to focus group participants, the main barriers to HIV testing include:

- Racism
- Stigma
- Fear of being deported if found to be living with HIV
- Lack of information about HIV
- Lack of connection to health care
- Poor relationships with healthcare providers



Access to care

Experiences of racism

According to focus group participants, ACB people experience racism on a daily basis while trying to access housing, employment, education and health care, which may increase their likelihood of acquiring HIV³.



21.8% of participants reported difficulties in accessing health care^d

Of the 21.8%:

28.6% said the provider was trying to give as little services as possible

23.8% reported the provider was insensitive or racist

10.7% said the provider judged people on appearance, ancestry or accent

HIV treatment accessibility among ACB people living with HIV

86.7% Had access to professional HIV care³

88.0% Had access to antiretroviral therapy³

96.0% Of those on antiretroviral therapy had a suppressed viral load, according to provincial data³

Barriers to accessing HIV treatment include cost of medication, geographic access, clinic and pharmacy hours and not having a doctor.

^aAccording to a scoping review performed by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). ^bEthnicity/race status were not reported in 35.3% of first-time HIV diagnoses. ^cStandardized estimate. ^dUnadjusted. ^eAccording to secondary analysis performed by PHAC. **References:** Ontario HIV Epidemiology and Surveillance Initiative. Trends in HIV testing, diagnoses and the care cascade in Ontario in 2022. Ontario HIV Epidemiology and Surveillance Initiative. HIV diagnoses in Ontario, 2020. Baidooobonso S, Kihembo M, Nare H, Mbuagbaw L, Husbands W, Etowa J, Tharao W, Djadeu P, Daboné C, Etowa E, Lawson D, Obiorah S, Ndung'u M, Ongoiba F, Inoua H, Odongo JK, Owino M, Nelson L, Gebremeskel A. A/C study Community Report: HIV among African, Caribbean, and Black People in Ontario. 2020. Mbuagbaw L, Husbands W, Baidooobonso S, Lawson DL, Aden M, Etowa J, Nelson L, Tharao WE. A cross-sectional investigation of HIV prevalence and risk factors among African, Caribbean and Black people in Ontario: The A/C Study. Can Commun Dis Rep 2022;48(10):429–37. Husbands W, Lawson DO, Etowa EB, Mbuagbaw L, Baidooobonso S, Tharao W, Yaya S, Nelson LE, Aden M, Etowa J. Black Canadians' Exposure to Everyday Racism: Implications for Health System Access and Health Promotion among Urban Black Communities. J Urban Health 2022;99(5):829–41. Ontario HIV Epidemiology and Surveillance Initiative. A Snapshot of HIV Diagnoses and the HIV Care Cascade among African, Caribbean and Black People in Ontario. 2022.