

# 2005 Georgia Tuberculosis Report

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## **Tuberculosis (TB) Epidemiology in Georgia**

In 2005, 504 tuberculosis cases (5.6 per 100,000 population) were reported in Georgia. This represents a 6% decrease from 537 cases reported in 2004, and a 44% reduction from the height of a resurgence in TB that occurred in Georgia from 1985 to 1992 (Figure 1). Georgia had the 6<sup>th</sup> highest number of reported TB cases and the 9<sup>th</sup> highest TB case rate among states in the U.S. in 2005.

### **Geographic Distribution**

Five metropolitan Atlanta counties accounted for 51% of Georgia's TB cases in 2005. The counties that reported the highest number of cases in metropolitan Atlanta were: Fulton (88), DeKalb (79), Gwinnett (48), Cobb (29), and Clayton (15). Outside the metropolitan Atlanta area, Chatham (16 cases), Muscogee (14), Richmond (14), and Dougherty (12) counties reported the highest number of TB cases. DeKalb County had the highest TB case rate (11.6 per 100,000) in 2005 followed by Fulton County (9.6 per 100,000). Among Georgia's 18 Public Health Districts, Districts 4 (LaGrange) and 10 (Athens) had the lowest TB case rates (2.2 per 100,000) in 2005 (Figures 2-3).

### **Sex and Age Distribution**

TB occurred predominantly (61%) among men and only a slight (0.6%) decrease in male cases was reported from 2004 to 2005. Among women, a 16% decrease was reported (from 209 cases in 2004 to 176 cases in 2005). The highest number of TB cases (187 cases) for both sexes by age group occurred in persons 25 to 44 years old, followed by persons in the 45-64 year old age group (127 cases) (Figure 4). TB case rates in these two age groups have been decreasing over the past five years (from 2001 to 2005) (Figure 5). In 2005, the highest case rate by age group was in persons 65 years old and older (8.6 per 100,000) while the lowest was in children 5 to 14 years old (0.9 per 100,000).

### **Race/Ethnicity and TB Disparities**

TB disproportionately affects racial/ethnic minorities in Georgia. Racial/ethnic minorities represented 40% of the Georgia population but 83% of TB cases in 2005; 57% were non-Hispanic blacks, 18% were Hispanics, and 8% were Asians, while non-Hispanic whites constituted 16% of cases (Figure 6). The highest TB case rate was in Asians (17.9 per 100,000) followed by Hispanics (13.9 per 100,000) and non-Hispanic blacks (10.8 per 100,000). The black case rate was seven times higher than the white rate (Figure 7). The TB case rate for black men was 4.5 times higher than for white men (17.4 vs. 3.9 per 100,000, respectively) while the case rate for black women was nine times higher than for white women (8.7 vs. 1 per 100,000 respectively). Over the past five years, TB case rates in all racial/ethnic groups in Georgia have been decreasing.

## **High-Risk Populations**

### Foreign-born

The number and proportion of TB cases among persons born outside of the United States increased from 159 cases (29%) in 2001 to 185 cases (37%) in 2005. Of these, 50% were diagnosed in the first three years of their arrival in the U.S. In 2005, most foreign-born cases came from Mexico (40 cases), Vietnam (17), Guatemala (15), Ethiopia (15), and India (12), countries where TB is an endemic disease (Figures 8-9).

### Refugees and Immigrants

Of 173 refugees and immigrants who arrived in Georgia in 2005 with non-infectious TB diagnosed abroad in accordance with U.S. embassy procedures, 135 (78%) were re-evaluated by county health departments after their arrival. Seven (5%) were diagnosed with active TB and received TB treatment from public health clinics in Georgia.

### HIV co-infection

Persons with HIV infection have a markedly high risk of acquiring TB soon after exposure to a patient with infectious TB. HIV co-infection was present in 69 (16%) of 437 TB cases whose HIV status was known. The number and proportion of TB cases co-infected with HIV decreased in the past five years while the rate of HIV testing has steadily improved (Figure 10). Among TB cases in adults aged 25-44 years old, 95% were tested for HIV in 2005 compared to 91% tested in 2001.

### Congregate Settings and Substance Abuse

Persons residing in crowded congregate settings such as homeless shelters and prisons are at risk for acquiring TB. In 2005, 42 (8%) cases were homeless, 25 (5%) were residents of correctional facilities, and 8 (1%) were residents of long-term care facilities. This represents a small increase in the number of cases occurring among the homeless and residents of correctional facilities from the year before; however, cases in these high-risk settings have decreased over the past 5 years (by 33%, 24% and 61% among homeless cases, cases in correctional inmates and long-term care residents, respectively). Of the cases in correctional facilities, 13 were incarcerated in county jails while 12 were inmates of state prisons. Substance abuse of either drugs or alcohol was reported in 96 (19%) cases in 2005. The proportion of TB cases who were reported to be substance abusers over the past 5 years has ranged from 17% to 22% (Figure 11).

### Pediatric TB

TB in children is considered a sentinel public health event because it indicates recent transmission from an infectious adult case. Potentially lethal forms of TB such as TB meningitis can develop in very young children. In 2005, children younger than 15 years old comprised 8% of Georgia TB cases; 30 cases were reported in children younger than 5 years old, 11 cases in children 5 to 14 years old. The major sites of disease among pediatric cases were pulmonary (78%), lymphatic (20%), and meningeal (2%). The case rate in children less than 5 years old and in children 5 to 14 years old was 4.3 per 100,000 and 0.9 per 100,000, respectively.

## **Drug Resistance**

Of 397 culture-confirmed cases with no previous history of TB, 392 (99%) were tested for drug susceptibility to the three first line anti-TB medications: isoniazid (INH), rifampin (RIF) and ethambutol (EMB). Of these tested isolates, 24 (6%) had primary resistance to INH, 3 (0.8%) to RIF, and 2 (0.5%) to EMB. One case (0.3%) had multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) i.e., resistance to at least INH and RIF. Primary INH resistance has ranged from 5% to 8% in the past 5 years while an average of two MDR-TB cases per year was reported over that time period (Figure 12).

## **Indicators of Infectiousness**

Persons with pulmonary or laryngeal TB have the potential of infecting others with TB, and more so if they are sputum smear positive for acid-fast bacilli (AFB), culture positive for *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, or have cavitory lesions on chest radiography. In 2005, 77% of cases had pulmonary TB, 50% of 443 cases whose sputum was tested for AFB had positive smears, 75% of 416 cases for which sputum culture was performed had positive *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* cultures, and 32% of 382 cases who underwent chest radiography showed radiographic evidence of cavitory lesions.

## **Hospitalized TB Patients and Outpatient Follow-up**

In Georgia, most initial TB diagnoses are made in a hospital rather than in an outpatient clinic. In 2004-2005, 656 (63%) of 1,041 TB patients were initially reported to public health authorities by 114 different hospitals in Georgia. About a fourth of these hospitalized patients were admitted to Grady Memorial Hospital, a public tertiary referral hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. After hospital discharge, the majority (92%) of TB patients was followed-up and managed by county health departments that provided monthly evaluation and directly observed therapy. Only 8% of cases were cared for solely by a private physician.

## **TB Mortality**

Thirty-one persons died of TB in GA in 2004, the most recent year with available mortality data. From 2000 to 2004, an average of 26 people died of TB per year (range = 15-32). The age-adjusted TB mortality rate was 0.4 per 100,000 in 2004 – a slight increase from 0.2 deaths per 100,000 in 2003.

## **TB Program Objectives:**

**Objective 1:** 90% of Georgia TB patients will complete a course of TB treatment within 12 months of starting treatment.

Among 462 patients started on TB treatment in 2004, 92% completed their full course of treatment and 82% of patients eligible for a 12-month treatment course

completed treatment in 12 months. Timely treatment completion was lower than the state average of 82% among substance abusers (68%), homeless cases (69%), HIV infected cases (73%), and patients exclusively treated by private providers (75%). Timely treatment completion has improved since directly observed therapy became the standard of care for TB treatment in Georgia in 1994 (Figure 13).

Objective 2: At least 95 percent of cases with sputum smears that are positive for acid-fast bacillus will have contacts identified.

Georgia achieved this goal in 2004, the most recent year with complete data on contact follow-up. Of 220 cases with sputum smears that were positive for acid-fast bacillus (an indicator of infectiousness), 209 (95%) had contacts identified by county health departments.

Objective 3: At least 75 percent of persons with latent TB infection (LTBI) and started on treatment for latent TB infection will complete preventive LTBI therapy.

Of 723 infected contacts started on LTBI therapy in 2004, 454 (63%) completed LTBI treatment. Of those who did not complete therapy, most (52%) chose to stop therapy on their own and 36% were lost to follow-up. Completion of LTBI therapy, though below the benchmark objective, has steadily improved from five years ago when it was only 54% (Figure 14).

**Table 1. Number of TB Cases and TB Case Rates (per 100,000) by County, Georgia, 2004-2005**

| COUNTY  | 2004            |           | 2005            |           |
|---|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
|   | Number of cases | Case Rate | Number of cases | Case Rate |
| Appling   | <5              | 5.6       | 0               | 0         |
| Atkinson  | <5              | 12.5      | <5              | 12.4      |
| Bacon   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Baker   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Baldwin   | <5              | 4.4       | 0               | 0         |
| Banks   | <5              | 6.4       | 0               | 0         |
| Barrow  | 0               | 0         | <5              | 3.3       |
| Bartow  | 6               | 6.9       | 6               | 6.7       |
| Ben Hill  | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Berrien   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Bibb  | 10              | 6.4       | 9               | 5.8       |
| Bleckley  | <5              | 8.3       | 0               | 0         |
| Brantley  | <5              | 12.9      | 0               | 0         |
| Brooks  | <5              | 6.1       | 0               | 0         |
| Bryan   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Bulloch   | <5              | 4.9       | <5              | 3.2       |
| Burke   | <5              | 12.9      | <5              | 12.9      |
| Butts   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Calhoun   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Camden  | <5              | 2.2       | <5              | 2.2       |
| Candler   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Carroll   | 8               | 7.8       | <5              | 2.8       |
| Catoosa   | <5              | 1.7       | <5              | 4.9       |
| Charlton  | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Chatham   | 10              | 4.2       | 16              | 6.7       |
| Chattahoochee                                       | 0               | 0         | <5              | 6.8       |
| Chattooga   | <5              | 7.5       | <5              | 3.8       |
| Cherokee  | <5              | 2.3       | <5              | 1.6       |
| Clarke  | <5              | 2.9       | <5              | 1.9       |
| Clay  | 0               | 0         | <5              | 30.8      |
| Clayton   | 14              | 5.3       | 15              | 5.6       |
| Clinch  | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Cobb  | 29              | 4.4       | 29              | 4.4       |
| Coffee  | <5              | 5.1       | <5              | 2.5       |
| Colquitt  | <5              | 6.8       | <5              | 4.6       |
| Columbia<br>(excludes Augusta State Medical Prison) | <5              | 2.0       | <5              | 1.9       |
| Cook  | 0               | 0         | <5              | 6.1       |
| Coweta  | <5              | 0.9       | <5              | 0.9       |
| Crawford  | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Crisp   | <5              | 18.2      | <5              | 18.2      |
| Dade  | <5              | 6.2       | 0               | 0         |
| Dawson  | 0               | 0         | <5              | 5.1       |
| Decatur   | 0               | 0         | <5              | 3.5       |
| DeKalb  | 72              | 10.6      | 79              | 11.6      |
| Dodge   | <5              | 5.1       | <5              | 5.1       |
| Dooly   | <5              | 25.8      | <5              | 25.5      |
| Dougherty   | 8               | 8.4       | 12              | 12.6      |
| Douglas   | 3               | 2.8       | <5              | 0.9       |

| COUNTY     | 2004            |           | 2005            |           |
|------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
|            | Number of cases | Case Rate | Number of cases | Case Rate |
| Early      | <5              | 8.3       | <5              | 8.3       |
| Echols     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Effingham  | <5              | 8.9       | <5              | 4.3       |
| Elbert     | <5              | 9.6       | <5              | 4.8       |
| Emanuel    | <5              | 9.0       | <5              | 4.5       |
| Evans      | <5              | 17.8      | 0               | 0         |
| Fannin     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Fayette    | <5              | 2.9       | <5              | 1.0       |
| Floyd      | 6               | 6.4       | 7               | 7.4       |
| Forsyth    | <5              | 0.75      | 0               | 0         |
| Franklin   | 0               | 0         | <5              | 4.6       |
| Fulton     | 116             | 14.2      | 88              | 9.6       |
| Gilmer     | 7               | 26.2      | <5              | 11        |
| Glascocock | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Glynn      | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Gordon     | 5               | 10.2      | 5               | 9.9       |
| Grady      | 0               | 0         | <5              | 4.1       |
| Greene     | <5              | 6.4       | <5              | 6.4       |
| Gwinnett   | 42              | 6.0       | 48              | 6.6       |
| Habersham  | 0               | 0         | <5              | 7.6       |
| Hall       | 6               | 3.7       | 10              | 6         |
| Hancock    | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Haralson   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Harris     | <5              | 3.7       | <5              | 3.6       |
| Hart       | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Heard      | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Henry      | 5               | 3.1       | <5              | 1.8       |
| Houston    | 10              | 8.1       | 8               | 6.3       |
| Irwin      | <5              | 20.1      | 0               | 0         |
| Jackson    | <5              | 4.0       | <5              | 1.9       |
| Jasper     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Jeff Davis | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Jefferson  | <5              | 5.9       | 0               | 0         |
| Jenkins    | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Johnson    | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Jones      | <5              | 3.8       | <5              | 3.7       |
| Lamar      | 0               | 0         | <5              | 6.1       |
| Lanier     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Laurens    | <5              | 2.1       | <5              | 4.3       |
| Lee        | 0               | 0         | <5              | 3.2       |
| Liberty    | <5              | 1.6       | 0               | 0         |
| Lincoln    | <5              | 11.9      | 0               | 0         |
| Long       | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Lowndes    | 5               | 5.2       | <5              | 4.1       |
| Lumpkin    | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Macon      | <5              | 7.2       | <5              | 7.3       |
| Madison    | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Marion     | <5              | 14.1      | 0               | 0         |
| McDuffie   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| McIntosh   | <5              | 8.9       | 0               | 0         |
| Meriwether | <5              | 4.4       | 0               | 0         |

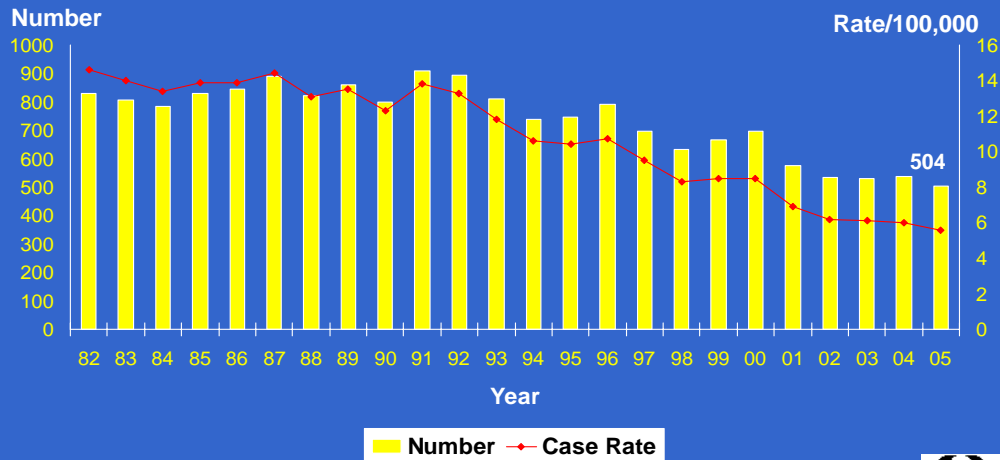
| COUNTY     | 2004            |           | 2005            |           |
|------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
|            | Number of cases | Case Rate | Number of cases | Case Rate |
| Miller     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Mitchell   | 6               | 25.1      | <5              | 8.4       |
| Monroe     | <5              | 4.3       | 0               | 0         |
| Montgomery | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Morgan     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Murray     | <5              | 2.5       | <5              | 2.4       |
| Muscogee   | 20              | 10.9      | 14              | 7.6       |
| Newton     | 0               | 0         | <5              | 3.5       |
| Oconee     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Oglethorpe | 0               | 0         | <5              | 7.3       |
| Paulding   | <5              | 2.8       | <5              | 0.9       |
| Peach      | <5              | 4.0       | <5              | 8.1       |
| Pickens    | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Pierce     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Pike       | <5              | 6.3       | 0               | 0         |
| Polk       | <5              | 2.5       | <5              | 9.9       |
| Pulaski    | 0               | 0         | <5              | 10.3      |
| Putnam     | <5              | 5.1       | <5              | 5         |
| Quitman    | <5              | 81        | <5              | 81.1      |
| Rabun      | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Randolph   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Richmond   | 9               | 4.6       | 14              | 7.2       |
| Rockdale   | <5              | 5.3       | 7               | 8.9       |
| Schley     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Screven    | <5              | 19.6      | <5              | 6.5       |
| Seminole   | <5              | 10.8      | <5              | 10.8      |
| Spalding   | <5              | 3.3       | <5              | 3.3       |
| Stephens   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Stewart    | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Sumter     | <5              | 6.1       | <5              | 6.1       |
| Talbot     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Taliaferro | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Tattnall   | 0               | 0         | <5              | 4.3       |
| Taylor     | <5              | 11.1      | <5              | 11.2      |
| Telfair    | 0               | 0         | <5              | 7.6       |
| Terrell    | <5              | 18.3      | 0               | 0         |
| Thomas     | <5              | 2.3       | <5              | 4.5       |
| Tift       | <5              | 7.5       | <5              | 2.4       |
| Toombs     | 0               | 0         | <5              | 3.7       |
| Towns      | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Treutlen   | <5              | 14.2      | <5              | 14.8      |
| Troup      | <5              | 4.9       | <5              | 6.4       |
| Turner     | <5              | 10.6      | 0               | 0         |
| Twiggs     | <5              | 9.6       | <5              | 9.7       |
| Union      | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Upson      | <5              | 3.6       | <5              | 3.6       |
| Walker     | <5              | 4.7       | <5              | 6.3       |
| Walton     | <5              | 5.6       | <5              | 1.3       |
| Ware       | <5              | 5.6       | <5              | 8.7       |
| Warren     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Washington | <5              | 4.7       | <5              | 9.9       |

| COUNTY    | 2004            |           | 2005            |           |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
|           | Number of cases | Case rate | Number of cases | Case rate |
| Wayne     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Webster   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Wheeler   | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| White     | 0               | 0         | <5              | 16.6      |
| Whitfield | 8               | 9.0       | <5              | 3.3       |
| Wilcox    | 0               | 0         | <5              | 22.9      |
| Wilkes    | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Wilkinson | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |
| Worth     | 0               | 0         | 0               | 0         |

**Table 2. Number of TB Cases and TB Case Rates by Health District, Georgia, 2004-2005**

| Health District                          | 2004            |           | 2005            |           |
|--|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
|  | Number of cases | Case rate | Number of cases | Case rate |
| 1.1 Rome                                 | 28              | 4.9       | 31              | 5.3       |
| 1.2 Dalton                               | 20              | 5.2       | 10              | 2.5       |
| 2.0 Gainesville                          | 8               | 1.5       | 19              | 3.5       |
| 3.1 Cobb                                 | 32              | 4.2       | 30              | 3.9       |
| 3.2 Fulton                               | 116             | 14.2      | 88              | 9.6       |
| 3.3 Clayton                              | 14              | 5.2       | 15              | 5.6       |
| 3.4 Lawrenceville                        | 46              | 5.3       | 58              | 6.5       |
| 3.5 DeKalb                               | 72              | 10.6      | 79              | 11.6      |
| 4.0 LaGrange                             | 25              | 3.5       | 16              | 2.2       |
| 5.1 Dublin                               | < 5             | 2.8       | 8               | 5.6       |
| 5.2 Macon                                | 28              | 5.6       | 24              | 4.8       |
| 6.0 Augusta/Augusta State Medical Prison | 20/13           | 4.6       | 23/7            | 5.3       |
| 7.0 Columbus                             | 35              | 9.9       | 30              | 8.4       |
| 8.1 Valdosta                             | 12              | 5.1       | 6               | 2.5       |
| 8.2 Albany                               | 22              | 6.1       | 23              | 6.4       |
| 9.1 Coastal                              | 17              | 3.3       | 19              | 3.7       |
| 9.2 Waycross                             | 13              | 3.9       | 9               | 2.7       |
| 10 Athens                                | 12              | 2.9       | 9               | 2.2       |
| Total                                    | 537             | 6.0       | 504             | 5.6       |

## Figure 1. TB Cases and Case Rates Georgia, 1982-2005



504 TB cases were reported in GA in 2005 – a 6% decrease from 2004



## Figure 2. High TB Incidence Counties Georgia, 2005

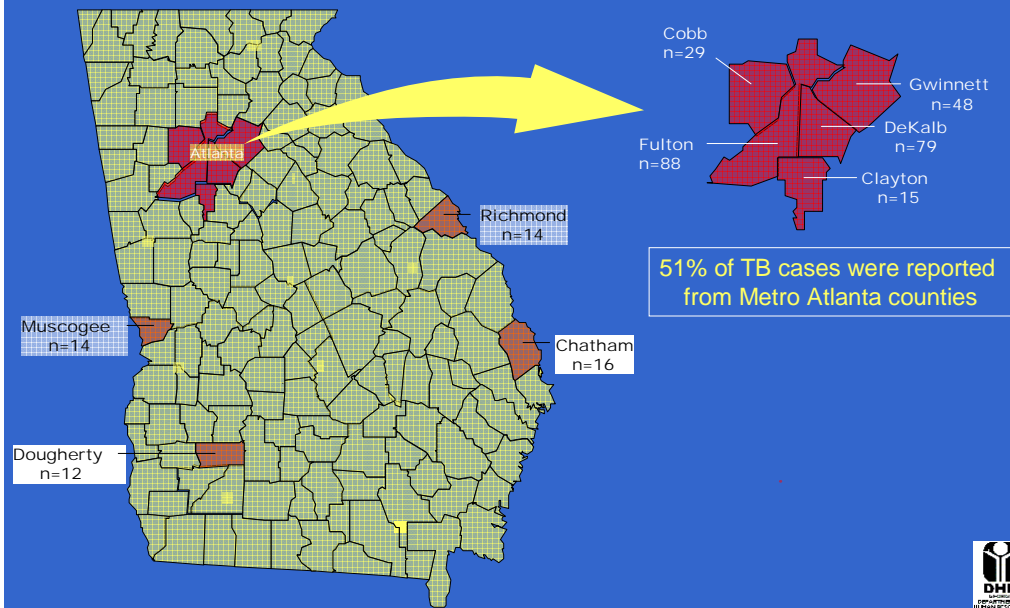


Figure 3. TB Case Rates per 100,000  
Health Districts, Georgia, 2005

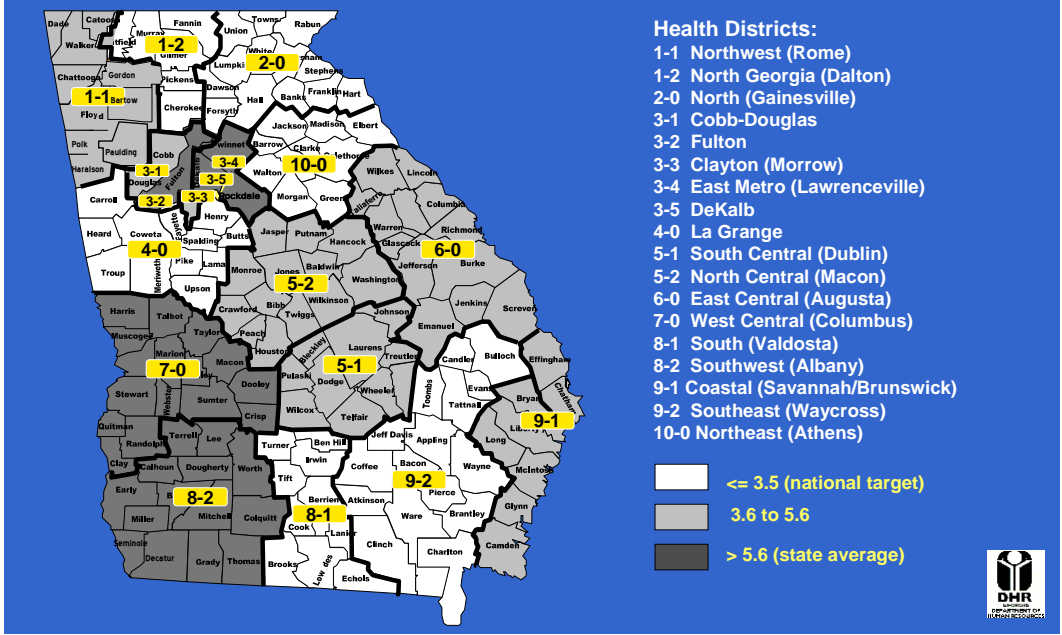


Figure 4. TB by Age Group and Sex  
Georgia, 2005

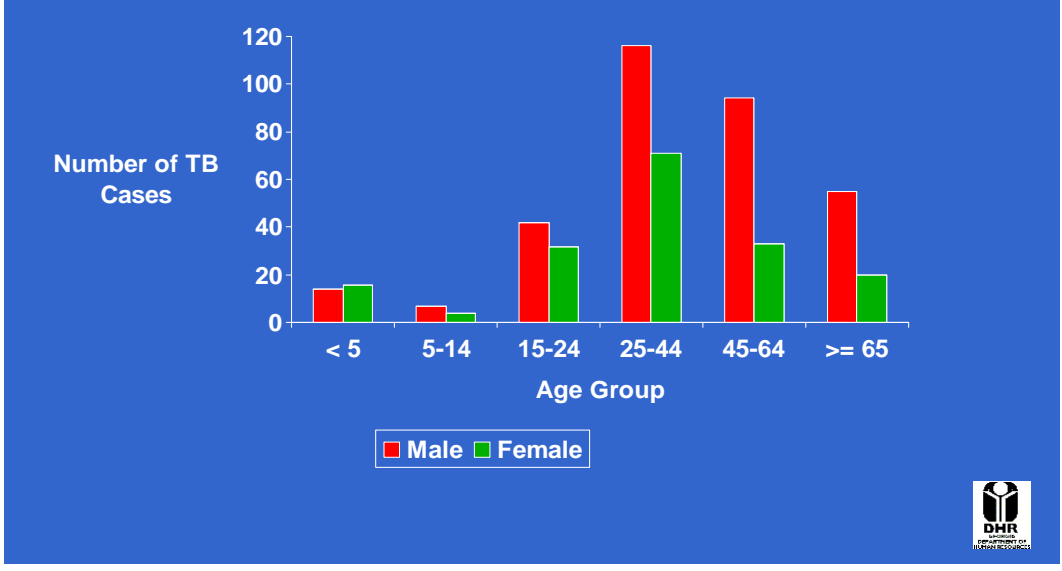


Figure 5. TB Case Rates by Age Group  
Georgia, 2001-2005

| Age Group | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|
| < 5 yrs.  | 3.4  | 3.4  | 5.0  | 3.5  | 4.3  |
| 5-14      | 0.7  | 0.7  | 0.8  | 1.0  | 0.9  |
| 15-24     | 4.5  | 4.4  | 4.7  | 4.9  | 5.6  |
| 25-44     | 8.9  | 8.7  | 7.4  | 7    | 6.6  |
| 45-64     | 8.3  | 8.0  | 7.7  | 8.6  | 6.1  |
| 65 +      | 9.7  | 9.7  | 9.6  | 9    | 8.6  |



Figure 6. TB Cases by Race/Ethnicity  
Georgia, 2001-2005

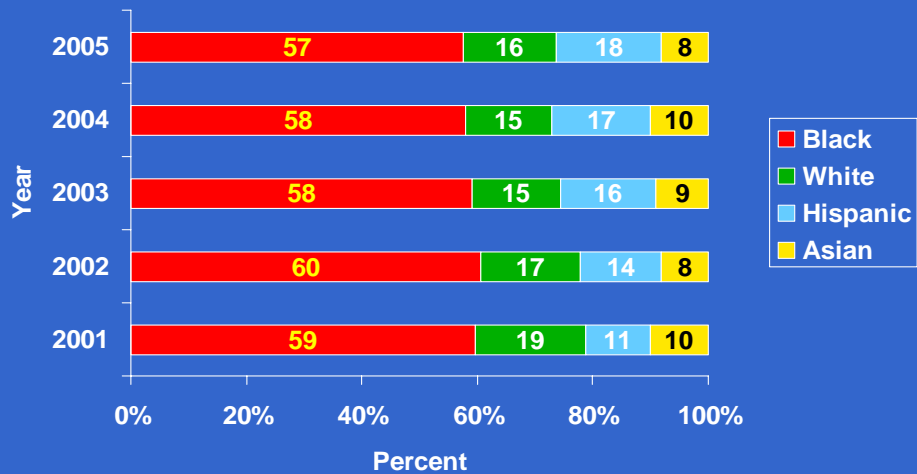
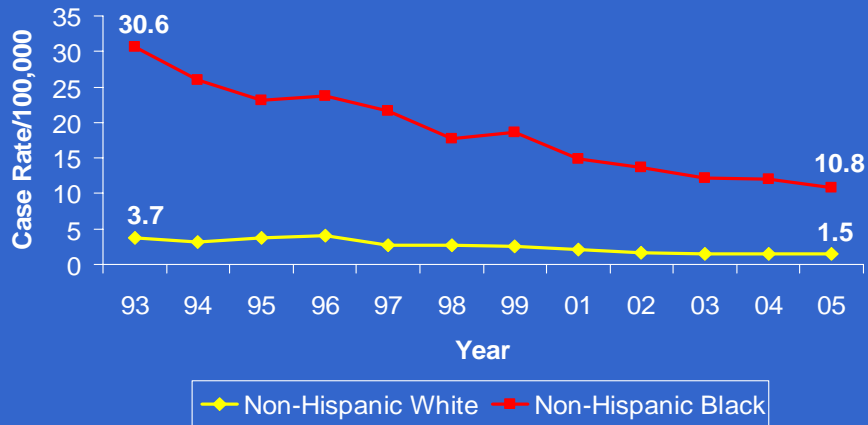


Figure 7. TB Case Rates in non-Hispanic Blacks and Whites, Georgia, 1993-2005



Black case rate is decreasing but was 7x higher than white rate



Figure 8. US-born and Foreign-born TB Cases Georgia, 1993-2005

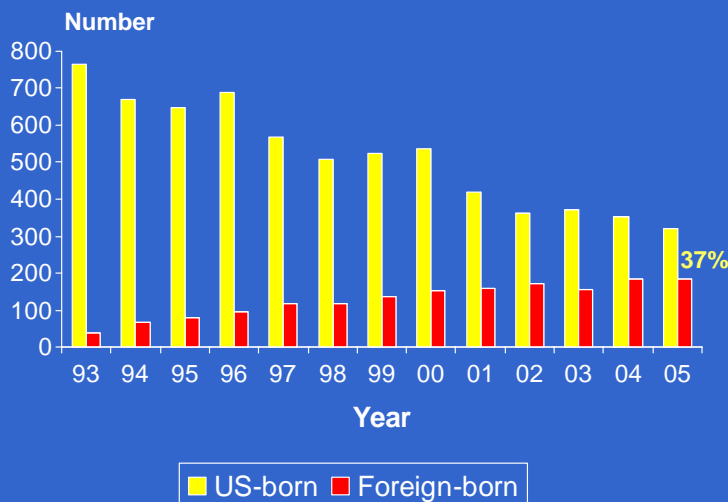


Figure 9. Countries of Origin of Foreign-born TB Cases  
Georgia, 2005

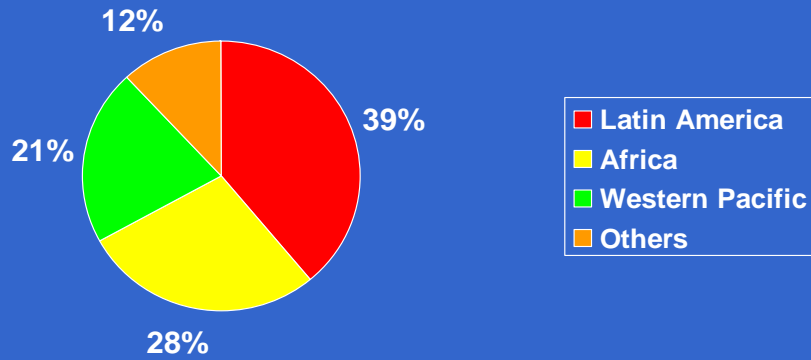


Figure 10. HIV Status of TB Cases  
Georgia, 1993-2005

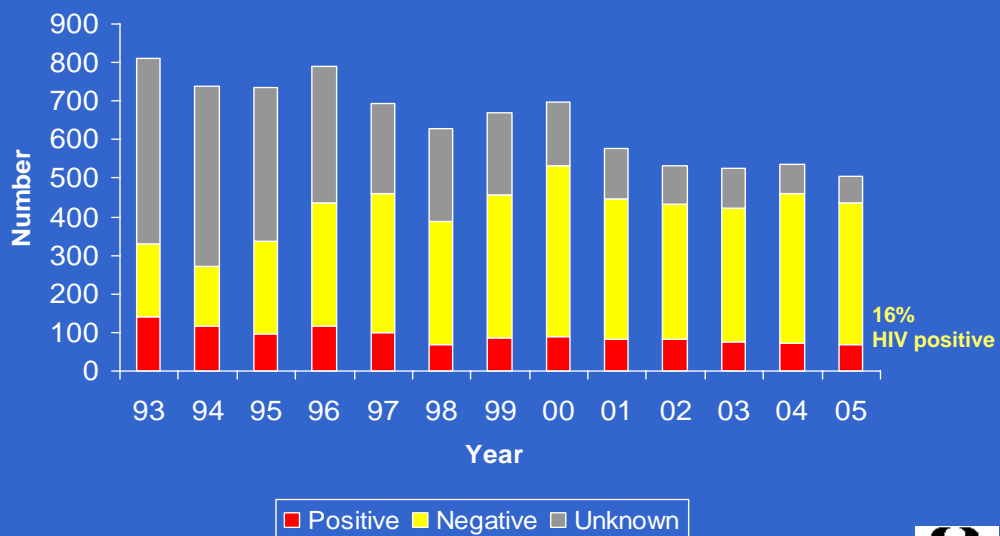
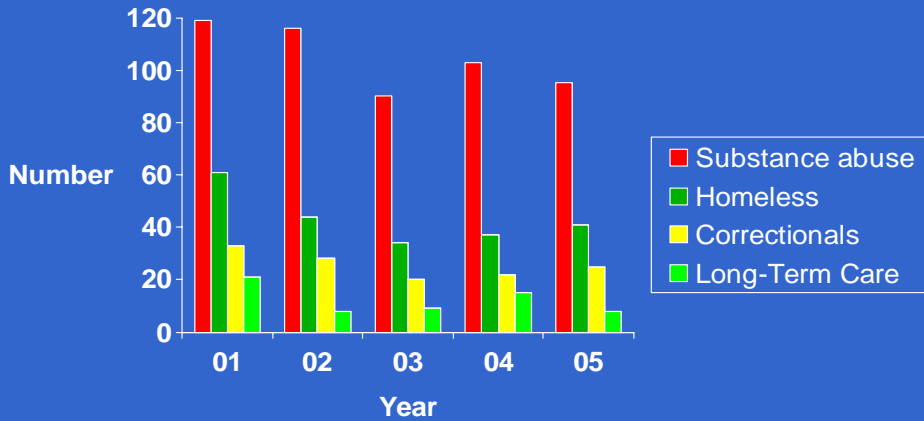


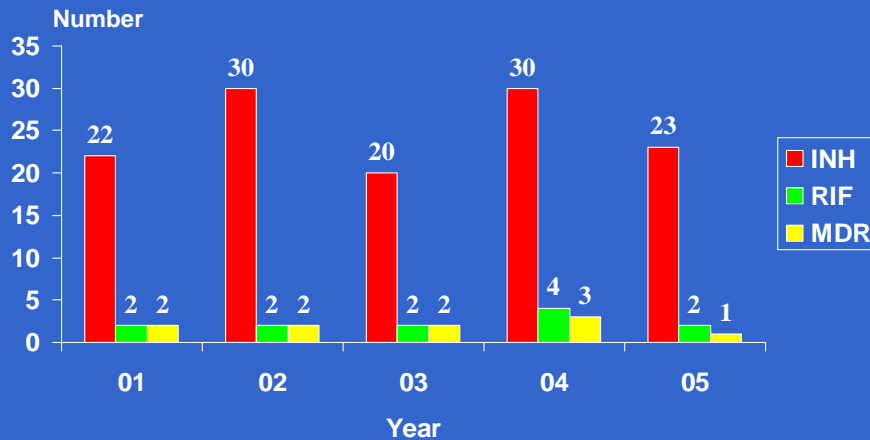
Figure 11. TB in Other High-Risk Populations  
Georgia, 2001-2005



Small increases from the previous year among homeless and inmates during 2005



Figure 12. Drug Resistance and MDR-TB  
Georgia, 2001-2005



Primary INH resistance was reported in 6% of isolates tested in 2005



Figure 13. Timely Treatment Completion and Directly Observed Therapy (DOT) Georgia, 1993-2004

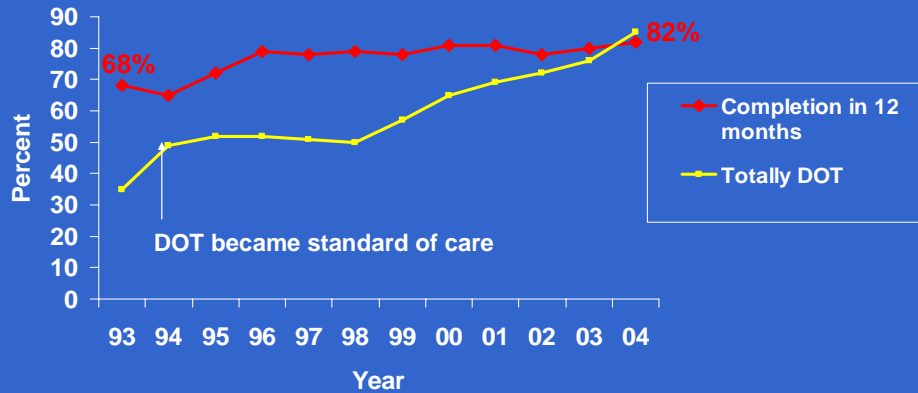


Figure 14. Completion of Latent TB Infection Therapy, Georgia, 2000-2004

