



West Virginia

EPI-LOG

AN ITCHY ENCOUNTER

The rash that drives us crazy for weeks comes from plants we may never see.

Poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac are plants with long histories of causing relentless suffering and sleepless nights, and an even longer list of supposed preventions and home remedies. Poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac are all in the genus of deciduous plants known as "Toxicodendrons" that aren't actually poisonous but instead cause an allergic rash in many people.

What's with the ITCH?

- Poison ivy, poison oak, and poison oak contain a resin, or tar-like oily substance, called urushiol ("yoo-ROO-shee-ol").

- All parts of the plant, except the bloom, contain this resin.

- Even dried up stems, leaves, and roots contain this resin.

- Over half of the U.S. population are allergic to this resin urushiol.

- People previously not allergic to urushiol may become allergic if exposed to these plants often enough.

- Eating the plant and breathing in smoke from the plant can cause severe, even life-threatening, allergic reactions.



(See *Poison Ivy*, page 3)

Statewide Disease Facts & Comparisons

A quarterly publication
of the West Virginia
Division of Surveillance
and Disease Control

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- First half 2006 reportable disease data (page 2)
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Division of Surveillance & Disease Control

AIDS Surveillance	(304) 558-2987
AIDS Prevention	(304) 558-2195
Cancer Registry	(304) 558-6421
Epidemiology	(304) 558-5358
Immunization	(304) 558-2188
STD Program	(304) 558-2950
TB Control	(304) 558-3669



Joe Manchin III, Governor
Martha Walker, Secretary (DHHR)

Provisional cases of selected notifiable diseases reported to WVEDSS

The West Virginia reportable disease rule (64CSR7) requires the reporting of selected communicable diseases. The table below lists the notifiable communicable diseases reported to WVDHHR from January 1 to June 30, 2006, using WVEDSS (West Virginia Electronic Disease Surveillance System). The provisional cases include both confirmed and probable cases with onset of disease on or after January 1, 2006.

Provisional Cases of Selected Notifiable Diseases Reported to WVEDSS January 1 to June 30, 2006 West Virginia

Date report is generated: July 13, 2006

Condition	Month Reported						TOTAL
	January	February	March	April	May	June	
Animal Bites	24	55	78	106	108	47	418
Botulism - Infant	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Campylobacteriosis	1	5	4	7	7	2	26
Cryptosporidiosis	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Giardiasis	0	2	1	3	3	0	9
Haemophilus influenzae, Invasive Disease	1	4	4	1	0	0	10
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome, Postdiarrheal	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Hepatitis A, Acute	0	0	1	0	3	0	4
Hepatitis C, Acute	0	1	0	1	0	2	4
Hepatitis C, Chronic	1	0	0	1	2	0	4
Legionellosis	0	1	0	0	1	2	4
Listeriosis	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
Lyme Disease	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Malaria	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Meningitis, Viral	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Meningococcal Disease, Invasive	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Mumps	0	0	0	2	8	1	11
Outbreak or Cluster	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Pertussis	0	0	3	3	4	8	18
Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Salmonellosis	1	9	10	9	7	8	44
Staphylococcus aureus, methicillin resistant, community	1	4	3	0	0	0	8
Streptococcal Disease, Group A Invasive	2	4	2	4	4	1	17
Streptococcal Disease, Group B Invasive	3	3	6	5	4	5	26
Streptococcal Toxic Shock Syndrome	0	1	1	3	2	0	7
Streptococcus pneumoniae, Invasive (>=5 years old), drug resistant	7	14	14	20	9	5	69
Streptococcus pneumoniae, Invasive (>=5 years old), drug sensitive	5	7	13	9	11	1	46
Streptococcus pneumoniae, Invasive (<5 years old), drug resistant or drug sensitive	2	2	2	1	0	0	7
TOTAL	48	115	146	176	178	85	748

This report includes only those cases reported to WVEDSS for which case status has been confirmed by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health

(Poison Ivy, continued from page 1)

Where do these plants grow?

- Possibly anywhere in the continental United States below 5000 feet elevation
- Poison ivy: the Eastern half of the U.S., Pacific Northwest, and Great Plains
- Poison oak: the Southeast and Western seaboard
- Poison sumac: the eastern third of the U.S.

Why do I end up with a rash when I didn't even see the plant?

- Resin (urushiol) from the plants sticks to tools, clothing or other objects for years.
- This resin may be active even in old, dried-up twigs, roots, or leaves from the plants.
- Pets can carry resin (urushiol) on their coats and can transfer this resin to people or objects.

What should I do to prevent the rash?

- Try to identify and avoid the plants.
- If in a high risk job such as forestry, firefighting, or road construction, see a dermatologist for a patch test to check how allergic you are to urushiol.
- Wear protective clothing
 - Protect face and hands
 - Wear faceguard and avoid touching face
 - Wear thick leather gloves with impermeable liner and long cuffs
 - If working around brush smoke
 - Wear fitted N95 face mask that doesn't allow penetration of oils
 - Protect skin
 - Wear coveralls and boots or other clothing that the resin won't be able to soak through.
 - No FDA approved vaccines or other products are on the market currently for preventing an allergic reaction.
 - FDA-approved barrier creams/blocking agents are available that may be effective if used as directed.

How do I get rid of the plant?

- DON'T BURN any part of the plant!
- BE CAUTIOUS when handling any part of the plant or objects, such as tools and gloves, that might have

touched the plant!

- Use herbicides - may need repeat applications and may destroy nearby plants.
- Natural: use goats (milk is fine to drink afterwards!).
- Chemical: use products as directed.

How do I remove the resin from my pets, tools, clothing, and gloves?

- Shampoo pets with pet-safe product and rinse well with water.
- Wash tools with strong detergents, vinegar, or rubbing alcohol.
 - Wash clothing, shoes, and gloves with vinegar or a strong detergent.
 - Wash contaminated clothing separately from other clothes.
 - Rinse out washing machine tub afterwards with vinegar.



How do I wash the plant resin (urushiol) off of me?

- Use a product that will lift the resin off of your skin such as mechanics' hand-washing degreasing agents.
- Rinse well with cool water afterwards.
- Wash as soon as you know that you've come in contact with the plant.
- Wash anytime that you work in an area where the plant might be.
- Be aware that the resin can be transferred to other parts of your

body while washing.

- Wash first those areas of skin exposed to resin and wash thoroughly.
- Don't forget to wash under fingernails and between fingers.

What do I do if I develop a rash?

- See a doctor as soon as possible to get relief from the itching.
- Rash can last for weeks causing many sleepless nights and lost days from work.
- Constant scratching can cause a wound infection.

What do I do if I inhale smoke from the plant?

- See a doctor immediately.

What do I do if I eat part of the plant?

- See a doctor immediately. ☒

West Virginia AIDS and HIV Infection Cases by Age Group, Gender, Race and Risk Behavior Cumulative through June 30, 2006*						
Characteristic	AIDS		HIV		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Age Group~						
Under 5	9	1	4	1	13	1
5-12	3	<1	0	0	3	<1
13-19	14	1	40	6	54	3
20-29	230	16	261	36	491	23
30-39	606	42	251	35	857	40
40-49	409	29	122	17	531	25
50 and Over	158	11	45	6	203	9
Total	1429	100	723	100	2152	100
Gender						
Male	1197	84	496	69	1693	79
Female	232	16	227	31	459	21
Total	1429	100	723	100	2152	100
Race						
White	1131	79	420	58	1551	72
Black	277	19	282	39	559	26
Other/Unknown	21	1	21	3	42	2
Total	1429	100	723	100	2152	100
Risk Behavior						
Adult						
MSM	777	55	303	42	1080	51
IDU	215	15	143	20	358	17
MSM/IDU	76	5	18	3	94	4
Coagulation Disorder	41	3	5	1	46	2
Heterosexual Contact with Known Risk	161	11	126	18	287	13
Heterosexual Contact with Unknown Risk	35	2	35	5	70	3
Transfusion/Transplant	36	3	6	1	42	2
No Identified Risk/Other**	76	5	83	12	159	7
Subtotal	1417	100	719	100	2136	100
Pediatric						
Coagulation Disorder	1	8	0	0	1	6
Mother HIV Positive	11	92	4	100	15	94
Subtotal	12	100	4	100	16	100
Total Adults & Pediatrics	1429	100	723	100	2152	100

MSM = Men having Sex With Men; IDU = Injecting Drug User

* AIDS data includes April 1984 through June 30, 2006;

HIV data includes January 1989 through June 30, 2006.

** Other risk behavior includes cases reported with no risk identified due to death or person moving away. These cases are closed due to inability to follow-up.

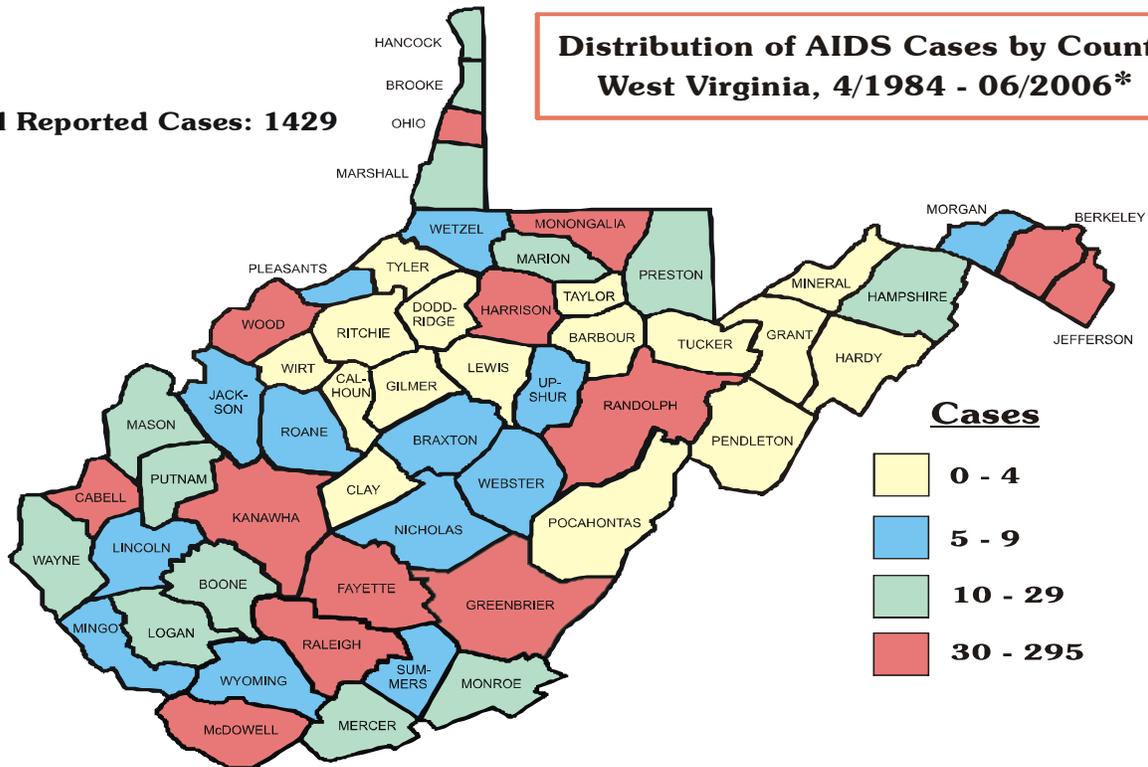
~ Age group intervals depicted in the table above may not be uniform due to:

- Small number of cases in the under 13 age groups.
- Cases twelve years of age and under are pediatric cases.
- 13-19 being the adolescent age group.

Note: Percent in columns may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Total Reported Cases: 1429

**Distribution of AIDS Cases by County
West Virginia, 4/1984 - 06/2006***

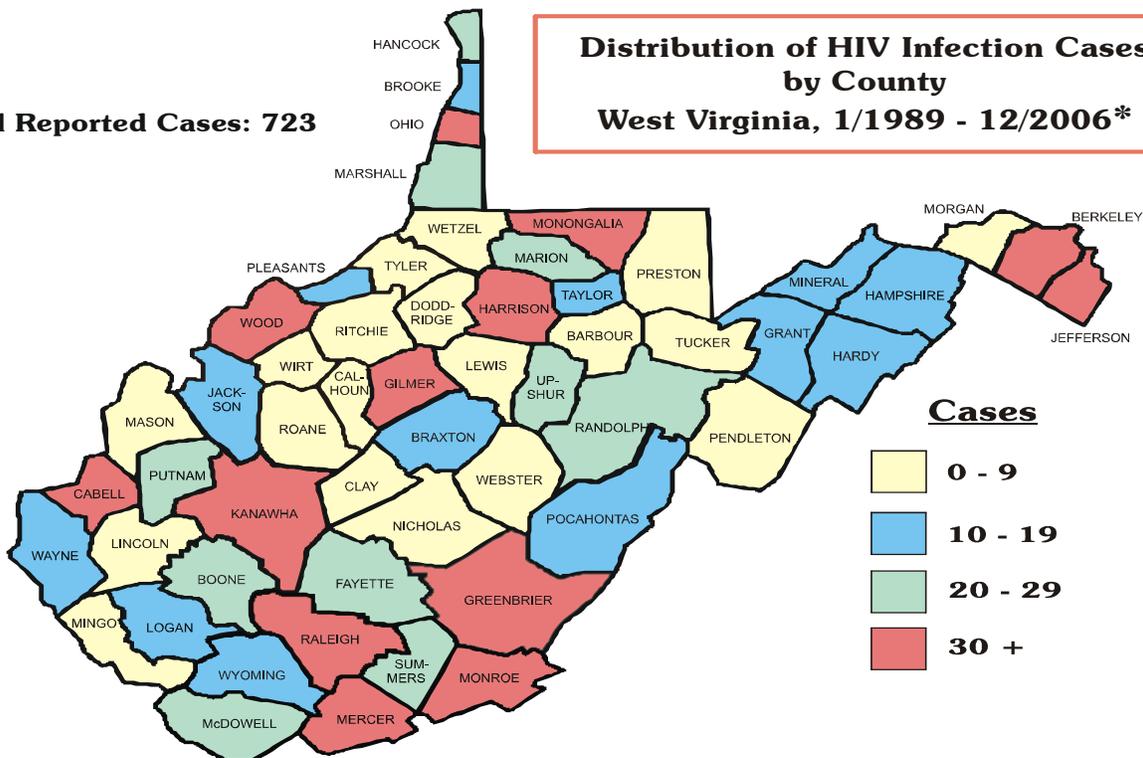


**Division of Surveillance and Disease Control
West Virginia HIV/AIDS/STD Program**

* AIDS data includes April 1984 through June 30, 2006.

Total Reported Cases: 723

**Distribution of HIV Infection Cases
by County
West Virginia, 1/1989 - 12/2006***



**Division of Surveillance and Disease Control
West Virginia HIV/AIDS/STD Program**

* HIV data includes January 1989 through June 30, 2006.

Mark Your Calendar

Wednesday, Oct. 18, and
Thursday, Oct. 19, 2006

Charleston Marriott Town Center
200 Lee St. E
Charleston, WV 25301

2006 West Virginia Conference on Infectious Diseases



The West Virginia **Department of Health and Human Resources** and the **CAMC Institute** present the **2006 West Virginia Conference on Infectious Disease**. The conference will be held Oct. 18-19 at the Charleston Marriott Town Center, 200 Lee St. E, Charleston, WV 25301. Keynote speaker for the conference will be **Michael T. Osterholm, PhD, MPH** — Director, Center for Infectious Disease and Research Policy and Author of *Living Terrors*. Dr. Osterholm will lecture Wednesday, Oct. 18 at 3 p.m. Reception and Book signing to follow 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, contact the CAMC community liasons at 304.345.9051 or by e-mail at communityliasons@camc.org.

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