

## Many HIV-Positive Males Unaware They're Infected

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) researchers have published the results of a study of more than 5,600 gay and bisexual males between the ages of 15-29 in the *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes* (April 15, 2005).

The study, headed by Duncan A. MacKellar with the CDC, found that the HIV epidemic among young gays and bisexual males "continues unabated." He found there is a low rate of testing for the virus among this population.

According to a Reuters report on this study, 10% of those surveyed were found to be HIV positive; 77% of these were

unaware that they were infected.

MacKellar says that the low rate of testing among young gay and bisexual males may be due to the belief that they're at low risk for the virus. He says that limited access to healthcare and fear of testing positive may also be important reasons why they fail to be tested regularly.

Half of those surveyed had engaged in unprotected sex within the previous six months. MacKellar says that the CDC is "working with [healthcare] providers to make HIV testing a more routine part of healthcare."