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## Number of STD cases on the rise in NC

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FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. -- Cases of HIV and Hepatitis C are growing in North Carolina. The statistics are raising eyebrows with the Better Health Care Coalition.

The organization is holding a two-day conference in Fayetteville focusing on the issue.

"It's a big concern in North Carolina because the rates of HIV infection are increasing nationally but particularly North Carolina. In new cumulative cases for HIV infection, North Carolina ranks five out of the 50 states," explained Director of Health Promotion and Education Steven Owens.

The rate in which HIV is spreading around North Carolina is an alarming number for a minority group that is suffering the most from the deadly virus in the state.

"In North Carolina, African-Americans account for 70, 69.8, 70 percent of HIV infection rates and that is very concerning," Owens added.

Increasing HIV cases in North Carolina aren't the only cause for alarm. According to the keynote speaker, North Carolina also ranks high among the nation's statistics in other sexually transmitted disease cases.

"North Carolina ranks 10 among the 50 states in the number of gonorrhea cases," Owens continued. "North Carolina ranked 13 among syphilis cases."

So what can be done to change the national rankings, and in which the state currently sets with these cases?



"There are a number of things that can be done but primarily people need to get tested, people need to know their status and people need to get into treatment," Owens said.

Doing those small things, according to Owens, will begin to turn around the numbers, and make the future healthier and

brighter for all North Carolinians.

If anyone thinks they need to be tested for STD's, see your local [North Carolina county health department](#).

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