

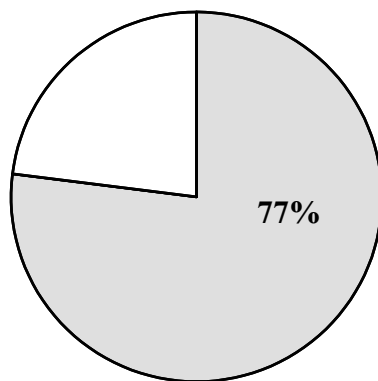
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland at College Park

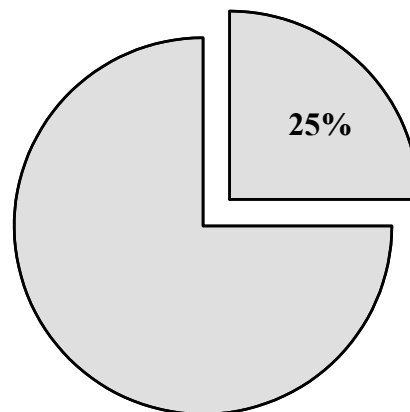
Research in Chicago Reveals Needle Sharing Linked to Clogged Needles

Qualitative and quantitative research in Chicago has linked the clogging of needles/syringes to the subsequent sharing of them by injection drug users (IDUs). Using data from three separate samples of heroin injectors over a period of 18 months*, researchers found that more than three-fourths reported clogging of their needles/syringes within the past year. One-fourth of those injectors who reported clogging also reported they had shared needles/syringes when this occurred.

**77% of Heroin Injectors
Reported Clogged Needles**
(n=856)



**And 25% of Them Shared
Needles When This Occurred**
(n=656; 77% of 856)



The researchers learned that the most common cause of clogging was improperly cut heroin. This may be due to “inexperience in cutting drugs and the difficulty of obtaining the usual soluble diluents . . . and adulterants” as well as the “intentional purchase by injectors of intranasal heroin . . . in the quest for a superior quality of heroin” (p. 319). The authors recommend developing “street outreach intervention strategies that can mitigate wherever and whenever possible the conditions that lead to the clogging of needles/syringes and the possible sharing of them” (p. 319). For more information, contact Dr. Terry Furst at 212-845-4498.

*The first set of data was collected from structured interviews with 39 respondents. The second and third sets of data were collected from an ongoing survey (n=417 and n=400).

SOURCE: R. Terry Furst et al., “The ‘Jelling-Up’ of Dope: Implications for the Transmission of HIV Among IDUs,” *Addiction Research*, 1997, 4(4):309-320.

CESAR FAX is supported by a grant from the Governor’s Office of Crime Control & Prevention.

CESAR FAX may be copied without permission. Please cite CESAR as the source.

•• 301-403-8329 (voice) •• 301-403-8342 (fax) •• CESAR@cesar.umd.edu (e-mail) ••