

HIV statistics revealed

Homosexual men still lead with 41 percent of cases

By Matthew Waite
Senior Editor

More HIV cases are being detected among heterosexuals, women and minorities, but homosexual men still make up the majority in Nebraska, the state health department director said Monday.

The total number of cases is not making any dramatic movements, Dr. Mark Horton said, but the numbers are still rising slowly.

"We haven't taken any quantum steps," Horton told reporters in a morning press conference.

Horton released to the media the first nine months of data from hospitals, doctors and laboratories. The information comes from a state law enacted last year requiring medical professionals to report HIV cases.

Nebraska became the 26th state to require HIV reporting to the state health department.

Before, only "full blown" AIDS cases were reported to the state, Horton said.

"If we didn't have this information, it would take us five to 10 years" to see trends in infection, Horton said.

HIV reporting gives the health department a head start on planning, he said. The department can now better focus resources on those represented in changing trends, Horton said.

Trends in Nebraska are lining up with those nationwide, Horton said. Women, minorities, heterosexuals and intravenous drug users are making up more of the cases.

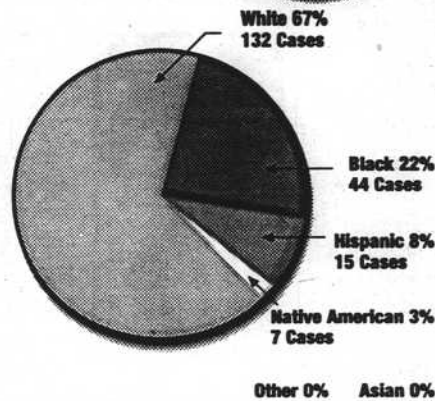
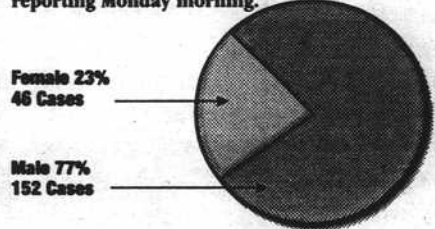
With AIDS data, the health department found that men had the disease at a 6 to 1 ratio over women. But in the nine-month HIV study, that ratio dropped to 3 to 1, Horton said.

Minorities made up 22 percent of reported AIDS cases, but constitute 33 percent of those with HIV, he said.

The study listed people by sex, age, race and risk behavior. Other study results were as follows:

HIV cases in Nebraska

The Nebraska State Department of Health released the first nine months of HIV reporting Monday morning.



Source: Nebraska Department of Health

● People age 30 to 39 made up 42 percent of HIV cases in the study. Those age 20 to 29 were next, with 35 percent.

● Of those with HIV, 67 percent were white, 22 percent black, 8 percent Hispanic and 3 percent American Indian.

● Men having sex with men was the largest risk factor involved with contracting HIV, reported in 41 percent of HIV cases. Heterosexual contact was next with 17 percent, followed by intravenous drug use with 16 percent.

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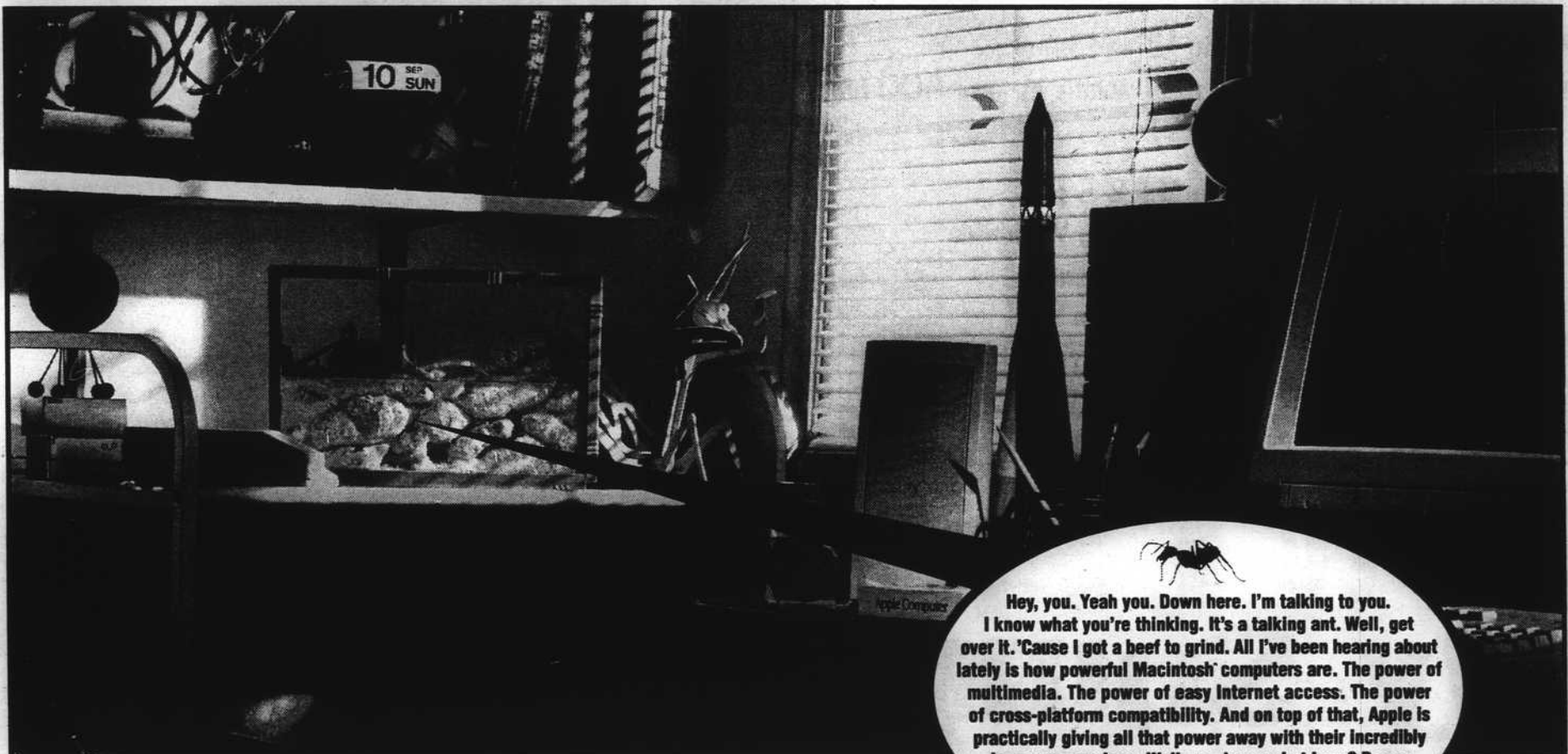
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