



Utah Expert Links Meth to High-Risk Behavior, HIV

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Much like cocaine in the 1980s, methamphetamine use is increasing the rate of today's HIV infections, according to an expert at the Living With AIDS Conference, held at Salt Lake Community College in Sandy, Utah, the [Desert News](#) reports.

According to Harry Rosado-Santos, MD, an associate professor at the University of Utah's School of Medicine who specializes in HIV, meth use is linked to high-risk behaviors such as having multiple partners and not using condoms, which leave users more susceptible to HIV/AIDS.

"Meth is cheaper [than cocaine] and easier to get," Dr. Rosado-Santos said. "We need to be careful."

The stagnant level of government funding despite the higher rate of infections was another issue raised at the conference. Health officials estimate that 2,300 people live with HIV in Utah and that the number is growing, but grant funding through initiatives such as the Ryan White CARE Act—which gives federal money to help AIDS patients in the state—has remained at the same level for years.

Toni Johnson, director of the People With AIDS Coalition of Utah, said his group will ask the Legislature for funding to supplement Utah's AIDS Drug Assistance Program.

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