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Kaiser Daily HIV/AIDS Report

Global Challenges | New HIV Cases Among Married Couples in Thailand Increasing, Survey Says [Oct 15, 2007]

The percentage of new HIV cases recorded among married couples in Thailand has increased from 38.7% of new diagnoses in 2005 to 40% of new diagnoses in 2006, according to a recent survey by Thailand's [Department of Disease Control](#), Thailand's [Nation](#) reports.

According to the survey, between 44% and 52% of married couples in the country engage in unprotected sex. The survey also found that 22% of new HIV diagnoses were among men who have sex with men. In addition, 11% of men who are newly diagnosed contracted the virus from commercial sex workers, and 10% contracted the virus from their partners, the survey found.

Thawat Suntrajarn, chief of DDC, said the agency has a plan in place to prevent the spread of the virus, particularly among married couples. The DDC and [Ministry of Public Health](#) plan to provide 20 million condoms in hospitals to couples living with HIV/AIDS to combat the spread of the virus. In addition, the health ministry will provide HIV-positive people with 10 condoms monthly and antiretroviral drugs at no cost. DDC also will provide 10 condoms monthly to HIV-positive people who do not show symptoms and will encourage their partners to receive HIV tests.

Thai Pharmaceutical Organization, Indian Company To Build Facility To Manufacture Antiretrovirals

In related news, Thailand's [Government Pharmaceutical Organization](#) is collaborating with the Indian pharmaceutical company [Hetero Drugs](#) to build a facility in Thailand to manufacture antiretrovirals. GPO Managing Director Witit Artavakun said the facility will produce between 80 million and two billion tablets annually -- enough to provide antiretroviral access to all Thais in

need of the drugs. The facility, which will cost about 850 million baht, about \$27 million, is expected to be completed within 18 months, the *Nation* reports (Pongphon, *Nation*, 10/11).

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