GAY MEN’S HEALTH CARE

Definitions

Sex: the anatomic distinction between male and female
Gender: the societal construct that is associated with men (masculinity) and women (femininity)
Sexual behavior: sexual activity
Sexual orientation: sexual and emotional attraction to another person
Sexual identity: expression and self-perception of one’s sexual orientation

Tips for Visits and the History and Physical

• Encourage the use of office intake forms that include “transgender” under gender and “partner” instead of “husband/wife”
• Promote the posting of non-discrimination signs, including those regarding sexual orientation/gender identity, on the walls
• Sex, sexual behavior, sexual orientation and sexual identity are NOT synonymous → do not assume one from another
• Use gender neutral language, such as “partner,” when inquiring about relationship/sexual history
• Ask if you may document patient’s sexual orientation/behavior and discuss issues of confidentiality

Resources

www.amsa.org/gender - AMSA’s Gender & Sexuality Committee
www.lgbthealth.net - National Coalition for LGBT Health
www.pflag.org - Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
www.glma.org - Gay and Lesbian Medical Association
www.cdc.gov/lnbthealth - Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
www.nctequality.org - National Center for Transgender Equality
Gay Men’s Health Disparities

1. **Cancer** – Increased risk for anal cancer unrelated to HIV/AIDS\(^1\) (35 per 100,000 vs 2 per 100,000 gen. pop’n)
   - Risk factors include anal intercourse, history of STIs, smoking\(^1\)

2. **HIV/AIDS** – Men who have sex with men (MSM) accounted for 53% of new cases in 2005\(^2\)
   - 46% of African-American MSM in five large US cities HIV positive compared to 21% white MSM\(^3\)
   - Risk factors include unprotected anal intercourse, STIs, alcohol/illegal drug use, unknown serostatus\(^3\)

3. **Mental health** – Poor methodology of current studies, but increased rates of bipolar\(^4\), major depressive\(^5\), generalized anxiety and conduct disorders\(^6\)

4. **Suicidality** – Increased rate of suicidal ideation and attempts, especially in youth (3-7x the gen. pop’n)\(^6\)

5. **Eating disorders** – Gay sexual identity a significant predictor of eating disorders in men\(^7\)

6. **Vaccinations** – All MSM recommended to receive Hepatitis A and B vaccinations; only 3% of MSM were vaccinated against Hepatitis B in 1996\(^8\)

7. **STIs** – Increased risk of HAV, HBV, syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, herpes, urethritis, proctitis, pharyngitis, and prostatitis\(^9\)

8. **Alcohol/tobacco** – 42% smoking rate in gay men vs 29% of gen. pop’n\(^10,11\)
   - Current alcohol studies equivocal, but more likely to be heavy drinkers\(^12\)

*To view references, please visit [www.amsa.org/lgbt/wcc.cfm](http://www.amsa.org/lgbt/wcc.cfm)*