



National HIV Behavioral Surveillance among Men Who Have Sex with Men (NHBS-MSM2)



The Florida Department of Health, Bureau of HIV/AIDS is collaborating with the University of Miami and the CDC to conduct National HIV Behavioral Surveillance (NHBS) in South Florida. NHBS involves a repeated, cross-sectional survey and HIV testing of populations at high risk for HIV infection: men who have sex with men (MSM), injection drug users (IDU), and heterosexuals at increased risk for HIV (HET). NHBS activities are implemented in rotating cycles so that data are collected from each risk group approximately once every three years; these study cycles are referred to as NHBS-MSM, NHBS-IDU, and NHBS-HET. Individuals who consent to participate undergo an anonymous interview and HIV test and are paid for their time. NHBS is conducted in over 20 US metropolitan statistical areas with high AIDS prevalence rates. The overarching goal of NHBS is to help evaluate and direct local and national prevention efforts.

Data collection for the second MSM study cycle (NHBS-MSM2) was conducted from June through November 2008 in Miami-Dade County. Venue-based, time-space sampling was used to recruit a sample of 527 MSM. Consenting participants completed an anonymous interview and HIV test and were paid for their time.

◆ NHBS-MSM2 Eligibility

- Eligibility was limited to persons who reported residence in Miami-Dade County; being male (not transgender); being at least 18 years of age; not previously participating in NHBS-MSM2; and the ability to complete the interview in English or Spanish. Analysis was limited to men reporting oral or anal sex with another male in the last 12 months.

◆ Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (N=527)

- 2/3 (70%) were Hispanic, 1/5 (18%) were black, 10% were white, and 3% other
- The mean age was 35 years
- 2/3 (64%) self-identified as gay; 1/3 (32%) as bisexual, and 3% as heterosexual
- The majority (59%) were born outside the US
- The majority (58%) were without health insurance at the time of their interview
- Half (52%) reported an annual income under \$20,000
- 1/5 (22%) were unemployed at the time of the interview
- 1/3 (37%) were depressed (CES-D 10 scale)
- A majority (85%) have at least a high school education; 1/4 (25%) have a college degree
- 16% were incarcerated in the past 12 months
- 13% were homeless in the past 12 months

◆ HIV Prevalence and Undiagnosed Infection

- 1/4 (25%) tested HIV+. Of these men, nearly half (45%) were unaware of their infection.
- HIV positivity rates were similar across racial/ethnic groups, but knowledge of infection varied.
 - 29% of white MSM tested HIV+; 13% were unaware of their infection.
 - 27% of black MSM tested HIV+; 72% were unaware of their infection.
 - 24% of Hispanic MSM tested HIV+; 44% were unaware of their infection.
- Groups of HIV+ MSM with elevated rates of undiagnosed infection include recently or currently homeless MSM (83%), bisexual-identified MSM (82%), recently incarcerated MSM (73%), and younger (ages 18-29) MSM (66%).

◆ HIV Testing

- Nearly all (91%) have tested for HIV in their lifetime
- Over half (56%) tested for HIV in the past 12 months¹
- Among those who did not test for HIV in the past 12 months (N=175), the top two main reasons reported for not testing were fear of testing HIV+ (43%) and being at low risk for HIV (26%)

◆ **Receipt of Prevention Services in the Past 12 Months**

- The majority (59%) received free condoms (excluding those from a partner, friend, or relative)
 - Of these men, 4/5 (80%) reported using the condoms
- 15% participated in either an individual-level² or group-level³ intervention

◆ **Sexual Risk Behaviors in the Past 12 Months**

- Of those who had anal sex with a male partner (N=482), the majority (61%) had unprotected anal sex at least once
- 4/5 (79%) had more than one male sex partner
- 1/5 (22%) had more than 10 male sex partners
- 1/4 (29%) of MSM sampled also had sex with women
 - 1/2 (49%) of black MSM, 1/4 (27%) of Hispanic MSM, and 10% of white MSM

◆ **Sexual Risk Behaviors: Main Male Partners⁴**

- Over 1/2 (55%) had anal sex with a main male partner in the past 12 months
- Of the MSM with a main partner (N=290), 2/3 (69%) had unprotected anal sex with a main partner in the past 12 months
- Of those reporting sex with a main partner at last sex act (N=188), 1/4 (23%) reported not knowing the partner's HIV status

◆ **Sexual Risk Behaviors: Non-Main Male Partners⁵**

- 3/4 (72%) had anal sex with a non-main male partner in the past 12 months
- Of the MSM with a non-main partner (N=377), half (50%) had unprotected anal sex with a non-main partner in the past 12 months
- Of those reporting sex with a non-main partner at last sex act (N=337), 3/4 (72%) reported not knowing the partner's HIV status

◆ **Sexual Risk Behaviors: Potentially Serodiscordant Male Partners**

- Of those who self-reported as HIV+ (N=73), 1/5 (19%) reported having unprotected anal sex with a partner of HIV- or unknown status at last sex act
- Of those who self-reported as HIV- (N=454), only 1% reported having unprotected anal sex with an HIV+ partner at last sex act. However, 1/6 (17%) reported unprotected anal sex with a partner of unknown HIV status at last sex act

◆ **Alcohol and Drug Use in the Past 12 Months**

- 1/3 (32%) reported binge drinking⁶
- Non-injection drug use was common (marijuana, 32%; cocaine, 25%; crack, 10%; poppers (amyl nitrate), 20%; ecstasy, 10%; downers, 8%; crystal methamphetamine, 7%; pain killers, 6%)

◆ **Internet Use**

- 2/3 (69%) reported using the Internet in the past 12 months
- Internet users (N=361) received the following list and were asked to indicate which activities they used to find sex partners:
 - Gay/bi oriented chat rooms (33%)
 - Instant messaging (29%)
 - Gay/bi personal or sex ads (30%)
 - Gay/bi Internet groups or clubs (26%)

¹ Analysis excludes persons diagnosed with HIV over 12 months ago

² An individual-level intervention is defined as a one-on-one conversation with an outreach worker, counselor, or prevention program worker about preventing HIV (excluding HIV pre- and post-test counseling sessions)

³ A group-level intervention is defined as an organized session involving a small group of people to discuss ways to prevent HIV

⁴ A main partner is defined as a sex partner to whom one feels committed to above anyone else (e.g., boyfriend, life partner)

⁵ A non-main partner is defined as either a casual sex partner to whom one does not feel committed or know very well or an exchange sex partner with whom one exchanges sex for things like money or drugs.

⁶ Binge drinking is defined as having five or more drinks in one sitting at least once a month