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Internet Use, Recreational Travel, and HIV Risk Behaviors in Men Who Have Sex With Men.

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Previous studies have documented higher rates of HIV risk behavior in gay and bisexual men traveling for leisure. Most of these studies collected data in high-risk tourist areas known for promoting alcohol and other substance use. The present study sampled a broader range of men by collecting data at a Gay Pride celebration, and asking participants about vacation experiences over the past 12 months. We also collected information about men's use of the Internet to find sexual partners before they traveled. Overall, two-thirds of participants reported recreational travel in the previous year. Of these men, 17% reported having sex with a new partner during their most recent vacation. Forty-three percent of the respondents were sexually active during their vacation. Sexually-active participants reported a mean of 2.01 unprotected anal sex acts during their brief vacation stay (M = 6.2 days). Close to half of the sexually-active men reported having sex with a partner of unknown HIV status. Alcohol and drug use were associated with unprotected sex. Men who used the Internet to set up dates prior to travel reported significantly more sexual partners and were significantly more likely to report having sex with a new partner. Many gay and bisexual men on vacation report behaviors that may place their health at risk, including substance use and unprotected sexual activity. Interventions designed to reduce risk behaviors in this population are needed.

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Men's beliefs about HPV-related disease.

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While human papillomavirus (HPV) infection is associated with genital warts, anal cancer, and oral cancer, limited research has examined what men think causes these diseases. We sought to examine knowledge and beliefs about HPV-related disease among gay and bisexual men, who are at high risk for HPV infection and HPV-related cancers, and compare them to heterosexual men. We conducted an online survey in January 2009 with a national sample of men aged 18-59 who self-identified as either gay or bisexual (n = 312) or heterosexual (n = 296).

The response rate was 70%. Fewer than half of men knew that HPV can cause genital warts (41%), anal cancer (24%), and oral cancers (23%). However, gay and bisexual men typically knew more than heterosexual men about these topics. Overall, most men believed that sexual behavior causes genital warts (70%) and anal cancer (54%), and tobacco use causes oral cancer (89%). Perceived causal factors differed substantially among the three diseases, while differences by sexual orientation were fewer and smaller in magnitude. Many men were unaware that HPV infection can cause genital warts, oral cancer, and anal cancer.

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Neighborhood-level correlates of consistent condom use among men who have sex with men: a multi-level analysis.

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There is growing evidence that the neighborhood environment influences sexual behavior and related outcomes, but little work has focused specifically on men who have sex with men (MSM). Using interview data from a probability sample of 385 young MSM living in New York City, recruited at public venues in 1999 and 2000 as part of the Young Men's Survey-New York City, and data on neighborhood characteristics obtained from the U.S. Census 2000, we conducted multi-level analyses of the associations between neighborhood-level characteristics and consistent condom use during anal intercourse, while controlling for individual-level sociodemographic and other factors. After adjusting for individual-level factors, neighborhood-level gay presence remained significantly and positively associated with consistent condom use during anal intercourse. This finding suggests that neighborhoods with a significant gay presence may have norms that act to discourage high risk sexual activity.