

Current patterns of unprotected sex, drug use, and prevalence of STIs among MSM on HIV care or taking PrEP in the region of Madrid

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Type selection

General data

Abstract category: Prevalence, incidence and dynamics of HIV epidemics

Title

Abstract body

Purpose: To assess risky sexual behavior, drug use, and prevalence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among men having sex with men (MSM) with and without HIV.

Method: This is a cross-sectional description of participants enrolled between 2022 and 2023 in the ATHENS study, a prospective multicenter study carried out in Madrid, whose primary objective is to determine incidence and risk factors for acute/recent HCV infections or reinfections among MSM receiving medical care for HIV (HIV-positive) or taking PrEP (HIV-negative). Demographic information, sexual practices, and drug use were assessed using standardized questionnaires. Prevalent STIs were assessed by serology and nucleic acid testing, irrespective of symptoms

Results: A total of 1,114 participants from 13 centers gave their informed consent and were enrolled in the study: 467 HIV-positive (99% on ART) and 647 HIV-negative. The median age for HIV-positive and HIV-negative MSM was 42 and 38 years, respectively. Patterns of unprotected sexual behavior, drug use, and prevalence of STIs are summarized in the table. In Brief, unprotected anal intercourse in the previous two months was reported in 65% and 97% of HIV-positive and HIV-negative MSM, with 33% and 41% reporting engagement in chemsex. At least one STI was detected in 9% and 30% of HIV-positive and HIV-negative MSM, respectively, most frequently chlamydia and gonorrhea.

	HIV- positive MSM	HIV-negative
	N = 467	N = 651
Age, Median (p25 - p75)	41 (33 - 49)	36 (32 - 43)
Non-native Spaniards, N (%)	171 (37)	273 (42)
Unprotected anal intercourse, N (%)	302 (64.7)	634 (97.4)
Drug use, N (%)		
Any drug use	205 (43.9)	472 (72.5)
Chemsex	155 (33.2)	270 (41.3)
Active STIs, N (%)		
Any STI	44 (9.4)	193 (29.6)
Chlamydia	12 (2.6)	88 (13.5)
Gonorrhea	16 (3.4)	82 (12.6)
Syphilis	23 (4.9)	68 (10.5)

Conclusions: Our study suggests that risky sexual behavior and drug use are highly prevalent among HIV-positive and HIV-negative MSM in Madrid. The prevalence of STIs is also common in both populations. These findings underscore the need for interventions to reduce sexual risk and substance use and for screening STIs among MSM on HIV care or enrolled in PrEP programs

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