



NYC Vital Signs

Sex in the City: More HIV Testing and Condom Use Needed!

Sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, are among the most common, serious, and preventable infections affecting New Yorkers. More than 100,000 New Yorkers are living with HIV. More than 80,000 new cases of other sexually transmitted infections were reported in 2002. Many sexually transmitted infections remain undiagnosed, as these infections are often without symptoms. Infections caused by chlamydia, gonorrhea, human papillomavirus, syphilis, and genital herpes put New Yorkers at risk for infertility, cervical cancer, and other serious health problems. Having any sexually transmitted infection increases the risk for acquiring or transmitting HIV during unprotected sex.

According to a recent Department of Health and Mental Hygiene survey, most New Yorkers had only one sex partner in the past 12 months. But those with multiple (2 or more) sex partners reported inconsistent

condom use and relatively low levels of HIV testing. Knowing your HIV status is fundamental to preventing the spread of HIV. For sexually active persons, the best way to prevent sexual transmission of infection is through consistent use of latex condoms during vaginal, anal, and oral sex.

Data presented in this report are based on the 2002 New York City Community Health Survey, a telephone survey of 10,000 New Yorkers age 18 years and older representing every community in New York City.

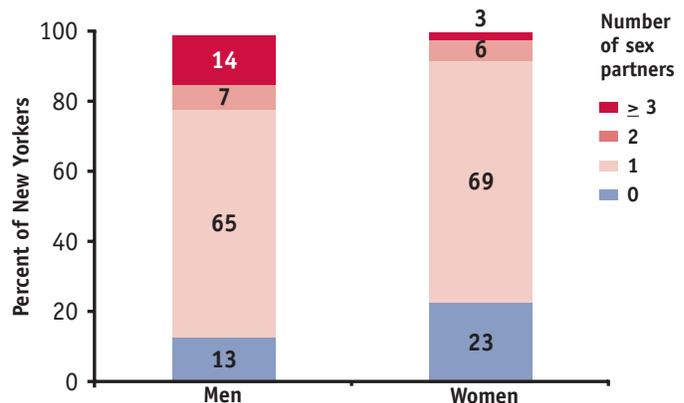
For full survey details, see: nyc.gov/health/survey.

Most adult New Yorkers reported only one sex partner* in the past year

- 85% of New Yorkers between the ages of 18 and 64 years (3.6 million) reported having either no sex partner or 1 sex partner in the past year.
- 374,000 people 18–64 years of age reported 3 or more sex partners—14% of men and 3% of women.
- Men who have sex with men (MSM) were much more likely than other men to have 3 or more sex partners (27% compared to 15%).

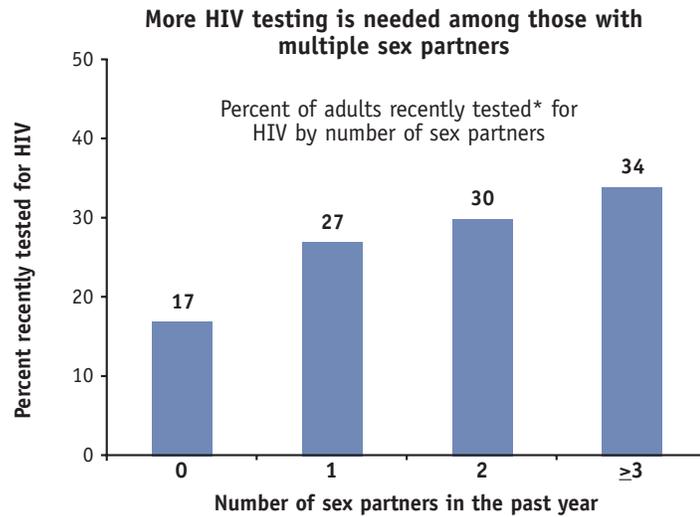
* Sex is defined as oral, vaginal, or anal sex in the past 12 months.

Few New Yorkers 18–64 years had 3 or more sex partners in the past year



Many people with multiple sex partners are not getting tested for HIV

- Only 26% of New Yorkers 18-64 years report having had a recent HIV test.
- Only 30% of people who reported 2 sex partners in the past year had a recent HIV test.
- The rate of recent HIV testing was only slightly higher (34%) for persons with 3 or more sex partners in the past year than for those with fewer partners.
- Among those with 3 or more sex partners, about two-thirds (225,000) reported they did not have a recent HIV test.



* A recent HIV test is defined as being tested in the past 18 months.



As many as 1 in 4 HIV-positive New Yorkers does not know s/he is infected. For information on where to get free, confidential counseling and testing for HIV and sexually transmitted infections, call **311** or visit our website at nyc.gov.health/std.

Condom use* is low even among those with multiple sex partners

- MSM report the highest condom use (45%), followed by men who are not MSM (38%), and women (33%).
- Younger New Yorkers reported more condom use (61%) than older New Yorkers (24%).
- Among New Yorkers with 3 or more sex partners in the past year, only 40% of those age 45-64 reported condom use, compared to 73% of those age 18-24.
- Among persons with 3 or more sex partners, 37% of women reported that a condom was used the last time they had sex, far fewer than the 61% of men.
- About one-third of MSM with 3 or more sex partners reported no condom use the last time they had sex.

	Overall	Those with ≥3 sex partners
Total (% of adults)	36	58
Sex		
Men (MSM)	45	63
Men (non-MSM)	38	61
Women	33	37
Age (in years)		
18-24	61	73
25-44	37	66
45-64	24	40

* Condom use is defined as the use of a condom at last sex

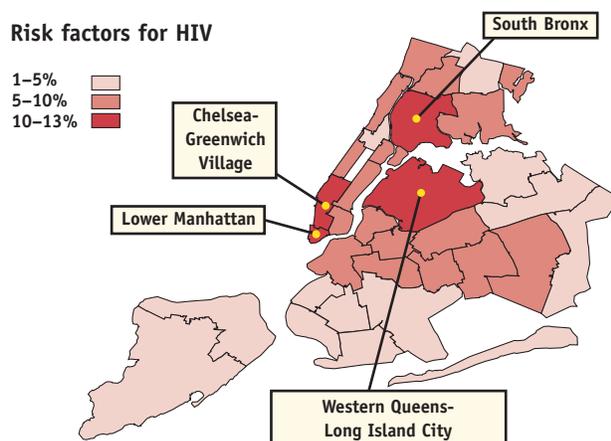
Young adults and men who have sex with men are more likely to report having risk factors for HIV

- Overall, 344,000 adult New Yorkers report risk factors for HIV.
- More MSM report risk factors for HIV (21%) than other men (9%).
- There is little difference in HIV risk factors by race or sex.
- More younger adults (10%) report risk factors for HIV than older adults (5%).

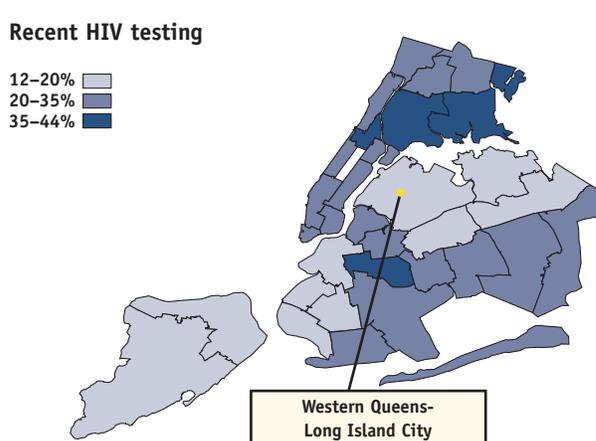
* HIV risk factors are defined as: having 3 or more sex partners in the past year and not using a condom at last sex; using intravenous drugs; having had a sexually transmitted infection in the past 12 months; exchanging sex for money or drugs; or having unprotected anal intercourse.

New Yorkers with risk factors* for HIV		
	Percent	Number
Total	7	344,000
Sex		
Men (MSM)	21	41,000
Men (non-MSM)	9	146,000
Women	6	143,000
Race/Ethnicity		
Black, non-Hispanic	6	67,000
White, non-Hispanic	8	139,000
Hispanic	8	111,000
Asian/Other	4	26,000
Age (in years)		
18–24	10	80,000
25–44	7	184,000
45–64	5	80,000

HIV testing is low in neighborhoods where more persons report HIV risk factors



- At least 10% of the population report risk factors for HIV in these 4 neighborhoods: Western Queens and Long Island City, Lower Manhattan, Chelsea and Greenwich Village, and the South Bronx.



- Overall, the populations of these neighborhoods report moderate rates of HIV testing. Of great concern, however, are Western Queens and Long Island City, where testing rates are low but HIV risk factors are high.

Recommendations

If you are sexually active, protect yourself and others!

- **Use a latex condom every time, especially when:**
 - You don't know your HIV status or you don't know your partner's HIV status
 - You or your partner are HIV positive
- **DO ask, DO tell:**
 - Discuss HIV/sexually transmitted infection status with every partner before having sex

Every sexually active person should know their HIV status.

- **Persons at risk for HIV should be tested regularly, especially:**
 - Sexually active men who have sex with men (MSM) and their sex partners
 - Injection drug users and their sex partners
 - Sex workers and their sex partners
 - Anyone diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection
 - Persons with multiple sex partners

Every sexually active person should talk to their health care provider about getting tested for sexually transmitted infections.

- **New Yorkers with an increased risk for sexually transmitted infections include:**
 - Sexually active persons younger than 25
 - Persons with a new sex partner, or persons with multiple sex partners
 - Sexually active MSM and their sex partners
 - Sex workers and their sex partners
 - Anyone with symptoms of a sexually transmitted infection, such as ulcers on the genitals or around the anus, burning during urination, discharge from the penis or vagina, pain with intercourse, or lower abdominal pain

A report from the New York City Community Health Survey



nyc.gov/health

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NYC Vital Signs features information on critical aspects of public health in New York City.

To contact NYC Vital Signs, e-mail survey@health.nyc.gov.

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