

Determinants of unprotected anal intercourse among men who have sex with men in Barcelona, Spain.

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Background: Spain has the second-highest AIDS rate in Europe. An HIV surveillance system was introduced in Catalonia in 2001. Men who have sex with men (MSM) accounted for 27% of the HIV-infection reported in 2001-02. Objective: to identify the determinants of unprotected anal intercourse (UA) with steady and casual male partners in the last 12 months. Methods: As part of integrated HIV/AIDS surveillance system, five cross-sectional behavioural studies have been carried out in Barcelona since 1993. Data from the last survey (2002) were analysed for this study. Anonymous questionnaires were obtained from 640 MSM recruited from saunas, sex-shops, cruising site and the mailing list of gay organization. Multivariate logistic regression models were used to examine the variables associated with UA. Results: Median age was 37.4 years (range 19-75). Fourteen percent reported being HIV+, 68% were HIV-neg, and 18% did not know their serostatus. The prevalence of UA with casual partners was higher in HIV+ (35%) than HIV neg or unknown men (20% each), whereas the prevalence with steady partners was lower in HIV+ men (28%) than in other men (HIV-neg: 60%; unknown: 53%). In multivariate analysis, the likelihood of UA with casual partners was significantly ($p < .05$) higher in men who were HIV+, used drugs before sex, had strained relations with friends or co-workers, and believed that HIV prevention was less important due to availability of ART. The likelihood of UA with steady partners was highest in HIV-neg men who reported that their steady partner was HIV-neg and in men who minimized the importance of HIV prevention because of ART. Conclusions: Reduced concern to HIV due to ART availability is the strongest determinant of UA with both steady and casual male partners. Moreover, promoting the disclosure of HIV status to sexual partners and tailoring prevention interventions for HIV+ men are additional priorities to decrease the HIV transmission in this population.

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