



LGBT HEALTH

TAKING A SEXUAL HISTORY AND GENDER IDENTITY HISTORY

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In a dermatology clinical encounter, it is often necessary to take a sexual history when patients present with a genital or anal complaint, or when the differential diagnosis includes a sexually transmitted infection such as syphilis or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Dermatologists must first be familiar with the patient's gender identity and sexual orientation. Intake forms for new patients, and medical records for existing patients, can help make this information clear when necessary. While asking transgender patients about their anatomy and surgical history is not always appropriate or necessary, when dermatologic complaints are related to the anogenital region, it is recommended to confirm the anatomy and surgical history with the patient.

When taking a sexual history, ask if the patient has sex with men or women or both. Ask if they have a primary partner, and if they have sex with anyone other than their primary partner. Identify behaviors including whether they have receptive or insertive oral sex, receptive or insertive vaginal sex, and receptive or insertive anal sex. In men who have sex with men (MSM), these behaviors affect their risk of developing chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, herpes simplex virus, human papillomavirus, and human immunodeficiency virus. MSM with multiple partners should get routine screening for bacterial sexually transmitted infections based on their behaviors. This process of taking a sexual history provides an opportunity to discuss prevention measures such as safer sex practices, vaccinations for hepatitis and human papillomavirus, and pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV. In cases of genital dermatitis or possible infections, taking a sexual history also allows for exploration of irritants or contactants that may need to be avoided.

In this session, we will discuss taking a gender identity history, and taking a sexual history. Time will be allowed for audience members to practice taking a sexual history if they choose to participate.

