

Individual-level Factors Associated with Current PrEP Use among GBMSM

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Background: Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM) have been disproportionately impacted by the HIV epidemic. Despite the introduction of HIV prevention strategies, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), coverage and uptake remain inequitable, contributing to persistent HIV-related disparities.

Objectives: This study examined individual-level demographic, geographic, and socioeconomic factors associated with PrEP use among GBMSM in the U.S.

Methods: The 2023 American Men's Internet Survey utilized convenience sampling to recruit sexually active GBMSM aged ≥ 15 who were cisgender male, resided in the U.S., and reported lifetime oral/anal sex with a man (or self-identified as gay/bisexual for those < 18 years of age). The analytic sample was restricted to GBMSM reporting current PrEP use or never having used PrEP (N=3524). We report descriptive statistics; bivariate differences in current PrEP use were measured using χ^2 tests ($p < 0.05$).

Results: Participants had a mean age of 47.9 years (SD=14.7) and were mostly non-Hispanic White (n=2557, 72.6%), gay/homosexual (n=2522, 71.6%), and privately insured (n=2356, 66.9%). A minority of the sample reported housing insecurity (n=221, 6.3%) or resided in rural areas (n=309, 8.8%). Nearly half the sample reported currently using PrEP (n=1586, 45.0%). Current PrEP use differed significantly by age ($p < 0.001$), sexual identity ($p < 0.001$), insurance status ($p < 0.001$), housing insecurity ($p < 0.01$), and rural residence ($p < 0.001$). Prevalence of current PrEP use was higher among GBMSM identifying as gay/homosexual, those aged 30-49 years, and those privately insured. In contrast, prevalence of current PrEP use was lower among GBMSM residing in rural areas and those experiencing housing insecurity.

Conclusions: Disparities in current PrEP use were found among U.S.-based GBMSM by age, insurance status, sexual orientation, housing insecurity, and rurality.

Recommendations: Future studies should examine the mechanisms underlying the observed disparities and inform the development of interventions that address barriers to PrEP uptake including, insurance-related barriers, rural service availability, and housing insecurity.

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