

Concealed male bisexual behavior as a risk factor for HIV transmission

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Despite the potentially sensationalistic and explosive nature of the topic, the primary aim of this lecture is to open an honest dialogue on the neglected subject of concealed male bisexual behavior as a risk factor for HIV transmission.

The lecture will discuss recent research in the United States and Canada aimed at understanding the scope and nature of bisexuality - a difficult topic to study, because of the social stigma attached to individuals who may identify as such. One important aspect of this research is the distinction some individuals make between private sexual behavior and public sexual identity, and how this distinction has very important implications on strategies of prevention and treatment.

Rather than simply condemning the concealed male bisexual, it is important for health care professionals to understand a) how social pressures contribute to the concealment of high-risk sexual behaviors; and b) how secretive sexual behavior of any kind —homosexual or heterosexual— is a major barrier to prevention and treatment of HIV.

The often delicate balance among legal, ethical, and therapeutic considerations in the treatment of the concealed bisexual male who is suspected of engaging in risky sexual behavior will be discussed. These issues include determining when it is important for the health care provider to identify mode and source of HIV infection, as well as the disclosure of HIV status to partners who are at-risk for infection.