

# HIV Risk Factors for Older Adults

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# Significance

- Older adults tend to be ignored in HIV prevention programs, HIV research and the in the literature
- Older adults account for over 10% of AIDS cases in the US
- Number of HIV/AIDS cases are rising among older adults
- People with HIV/AIDS are living longer
- Despite myths, older adults are sexually active and may do drugs

# My Project

- Research question:  
What are the risk factors related to the increased HIV transmission of older adults?
- Literature review of HIV risk factors for adults aged 50 and older
  - Specific risk factors for older men who have sex with men (MSM)
- Categorized risk factors as
  - Biological and behavioral
  - Societal and cultural

# Biological and Behavioral Risk Factors

- Normal age-related physiological changes
  - Post-menopausal vaginal dryness
  - Erectile dysfunction
- Unprotected sex is most prevalent HIV risk factor for older adults
  - Low rates of condom use
- Sex-related behaviors are the most prevalent risk factors among older drug users

# Societal and Cultural Risk Factors

- Structural barriers
  - Few HIV prevention programs target older adults
- Social bias
  - Ageism, stereotypes
  - Stigma
  - Gaps in pt-provider communication
  - Lack of knowledge
  - Inaccurate risk perception

## Older MSM

- Account for almost half of HIV/AIDS infections among older adults
- Major risk factors are unprotected sex, multiple partners, drug use, sex with an IV drug user
- Older MSM of color face triple jeopardy of age, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation

# Implications

- Further research on the specific HIV risk factors of older adults
- Prevention programs need to target older adults
- Nurses can assess risk, educate and encourage HIV testing among older adults

# Thank You!

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