

Essential Sexual Health Questions to Ask Adults

Ask all of your adult patients the questions on this card to start the conversation and to begin taking a thorough sexual history. For more questions to assess risk, refer to Table 1 of *Sexual Health and Your Patients: A Provider's Guide*.

Ask at Least Annually

Have you been sexually active in the last year?

NO

Have you ever been sexually active?

YES

→ What types of sex do you have (oral, vaginal, anal, other)?

YES

→ With men, women, both, or another gender identity?

NO

Continue with medical history.

Ask Older Adults

Has sex changed for you?
If so, how?

Conversational Tips

- Ensure confidentiality and emphasize this is routine for all patients
- Ask open-ended questions, for example, "Are there any sexual concerns or questions you'd like to discuss?"
- Be non-judgmental (verbal and non-verbal)

Ask at least once and update as needed.
Gender identity and sexual orientation can be fluid.

1. What do you consider yourself to be?
 - A. Lesbian or gay
 - B. Straight or heterosexual
 - C. Bisexual
 - D. Another (please specify)
 - E. Don't know
2. What is your current gender identity?
 - A. Male
 - B. Female
 - C. Transgender man
 - D. Transgender woman
 - E. Neither exclusively male nor female (e.g. non-binary or nonconforming)
 - F. Another (please specify)
 - G. Decline to answer
3. What sex were you assigned at birth?
 - A. Male
 - B. Female
 - C. Decline to answer

Recommended Preventive Sexual Health Services for Adults

Service	Female			Male			Transgender Individuals
	18-64	65+	Pregnant	18-64	65+	MSM	
STI Counseling	✓ ^a	✓ ^a	✓ ^a	✓ ^a	✓ ^a	✓ ^a	✓ ^a
Contraceptive Counseling	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Cervical Cancer Screening	✓		✓				✓ ^b
Chlamydia Screening	✓ ^c	✓ ^c	✓ ^c	✓ ^d		✓ ^e	✓
Gonorrhea Screening	✓ ^c	✓ ^c	✓ ^c			✓ ^e	✓
HIV Testing	✓	✓ ^a	✓	✓	✓ ^a	✓	✓
Syphilis Screening	✓ ^f	✓ ^f	✓	✓ ^f	✓ ^f	✓	✓ ^f
Hepatitis B Screening	✓ ^g	✓ ^g	✓	✓ ^g	✓ ^g	✓	✓ ^g
Hepatitis C Screening	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hepatitis A Vaccine	✓ ^h	✓ ^h	✓ ^h	✓ ^h	✓ ^h	✓ ^h	✓ ^h
Hepatitis B Vaccine	✓	✓ ⁱ	✓	✓	✓ ⁱ	✓	✓ ⁱ
HPV Vaccine	✓ ^j			✓ ^j		✓ ^j	✓ ^j
PrEP	✓ [*]	✓ [*]	✓ [*]	✓ [*]	✓ [*]	✓ [*]	✓ [*]

* HIV-negative and at substantial risk for HIV infection (sexual partner with HIV, injection drug user, recent STI, high number of sex partners, commercial sex worker, lives in high-prevalence area or network)

- a =** At increased risk: inconsistent condom use, multiple partners, current STI or history of STI within a year, or have sex partners within populations with a high prevalence of STIs
- b =** Screen male transgender patients who still have a cervix according to the guidelines for non-transgender females
- c =** Sexually active women aged <25; women aged ≥25 at increased risk (new sex partner, multiple partners, sex partner with concurrent partners, sex partner who has an STI, inconsistent condom use, previous or coexisting STI, exchanging sex for money or drugs, history of incarceration)
- d =** Young adult males in high-prevalence communities or settings
- e =** Screen all MSM at least annually on the basis of sexual behavior and anatomic site of exposure (including pharyngeal or rectal testing)
- f =** Screen those who are HIV-positive, pregnant, and at increased risk: exchange sex for drugs or money, in high prevalence communities
- g =** At risk: HIV-positive, unprotected sex, injection drug users, MSM, family member or sexual partner infected with HBV, born in an HBV-endemic country, born to parents from an HBV-endemic country
- h =** Those who wish to be vaccinated or are at-risk: HIV-positive, illicit drug users, people with chronic liver disease, MSM, international travelers, people experiencing homelessness
- i =** Recommended for all plus those 60+ at-risk: people who inject drugs or share drug equipment, MSM, family member or sexual partner infected with HBV
- j =** Everyone through age 26 years. Some adults aged 27-45 may decide to get the vaccine based on discussions with their clinician if they did not get adequately vaccinated when they were younger.