

## High Prevalence Of Chlamydia Trachomatis And Neisseria Gonorrhoeae Infections Among Hiv-1 Negative Men Who Have Sex With Men In Coastal Kenya.

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### **Abstract:**

**OBJECTIVES:** To assess the burden of Chlamydia trachomatis (CT) and Neisseria gonorrhoeae (NG) in high-risk HIV-1 negative men who have sex with men (MSM) in Africa. **METHODS:** Before the start of a pre-exposure prophylaxis trial, HIV-1 negative volunteers were screened for sexually transmitted infection (STI) including CT and NG, using a highly sensitive and specific nucleic acid amplification test. Samples positive for CT by Aptima testing, were evaluated for the presence of lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV) serovars using an in-house PCR assay. All men were asked to submit a urine specimen, and all had a rectal swab collected by a clinician. Men were asked if they had dysuria, urethral or rectal discharge, or rectal pain. **RESULTS:** 43 HIV-1 negative MSM were screened, of whom 13 reported sex with men only; the majority (27/43) reported sex work. One volunteer had dysuria and another, rectal pain. Eleven MSM (26%, 95% CI 14% to 41%) had infections with either or both pathogens. Homosexual men had a higher prevalence of any infection than bisexual men (46% vs 17%,  $p=0.04$ ), and all cases of rectal infections, including one with CT, two with NG and two with CT/NG co-infection. All patients with CT were negative for LGV. One patient with a rectal NG infection reported rectal pain. **CONCLUSIONS:** A remarkably high burden of STI infection was found among HIV-1 negative MSM. Most (12/13) infections, including three of four rectal NG infections, were subclinical. These findings suggest that high-risk MSM will benefit from effective STI screening in Kenya.