1. Prevalence and Initiation of Illicit Drug Use in the FLUX Study

2. The new MTV generation: Using Methamphetamine, Truvada, and Viagra to enhance sex and stay safe
Prevalence and Initiation of Illicit Drug Use in the FLUX Study

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Australasian HIV & AIDS Conference | 6 November 2017

FLUX Cohort Study

• Following Lives Undergoing Change
• Prospective study on drug use in GBM in Australia
  • GBM 16.5 years and above
  • N=1710 (1st wave, Sep 2014-July 2015)
• Nationwide
• Entirely online
  • 6 monthly questionnaire following baseline survey
Cohort Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.5-24</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥40</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HIV Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIV Status</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>1279</td>
<td>74.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know/unsure</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Definitions

- Prevalence (reported using at baseline)
  - Ever use
  - Recent use (last 6-month)
- Initiation: 12 month follow-up data
  - Retention: 77% at 6-month
  - 71% at 12-month
- Baseline: never used
- Follow-up: any use in last 6 months
Drug prevalence in FLUX

- Amyl
- Marijuana
- Ecstasy
- Speed
- Cocaine
- Crystal
- GHB
- Special K
- LSD
- Heroin

Frequency of recent use

- Once/Twice
- Monthly
- Weekly
- Daily
Drug initiation in FLUX

Drug initiation by age
Summary – Prevalence and Initiation

- Drug use very common in GBM
  - Mostly occasional use
- Close to half ever used crystal/meth are using currently
- Drug initiation rapid in younger GBM
  - Crystal/meth initiation relatively slow

The new MTV generation: Using Methamphetamine, Truvada, and Viagra to enhance sex and stay safe

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Why MTV?

- GBM use illicit drugs to enhance sexual pleasure (‘chemsex’ or ‘party n play’).
- In the context of intensive sex partying networks, chemsex has been associated with HIV sexual risk behaviours.
- Methamphetamine and Viagra have been found to be strongly predictive of HIV infection.
- Truvada, as PrEP, virtually eliminates the possibility of HIV transmission.

→ MTV for fun, HIV prevention, and function

Results

Of 3253 baseline surveys, 1831 included data about the use of MTV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglo-Celtic cultural background</td>
<td>1345 (73%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University educated</td>
<td>1127 (62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial or professional work</td>
<td>815 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most friends are gay</td>
<td>622 (34%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spent most free time with gay friends</td>
<td>1043 (57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify as gay/homosexual</td>
<td>1629 (89%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had sex in the previous six months</td>
<td>1648 (90%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prevalence over time

![Graph showing prevalence over time for Truvada only, Methamphetamine and Viagra, and MTV.]


Meth, Viagra vs. Meth, Truvada, Viagra

- Socially engaged with other gay men
- More than 10 sexual partners
- Condomless sex with fuckbuddies
- Condomless sex with casual partners

Truvada vs. Meth, Truvada, Viagra

Socially engaged with other gay men

More than 10 sexual partners

Group sex

Age

Summary

MTV was associated with:

- More socially engaged with other gay men
- More likely to engage in condomless sex with fuckbuddies and casual partners
- More likely to engage in group sex
Conclusions

- Including Truvada into drug use in the context of intensive sex partying offers a highly efficacious HIV harm reduction strategy.
- Truvada should be considered to complement other drugs that are used for chemsex.
- Gay community affiliations and social connections play a strong role in drug use among GBM.
- Provide an opportunity to promote the uptake of Truvada, particularly among those who do not use any other forms of HIV prevention.