

THE NEW MTV GENERATION- USING METH, TRUVADA, AND VIAGRA TO STAY SAFE AND ENHANCE SEX: RESULTS FROM THE FLUX STUDY

Hammoud MA^{1*}, Vaccher S^{1*}, Bridget H¹, Lea T², Maher L¹, Jin F¹, Bourne A³, and Prestage GP¹

¹The Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney, Australia

² Centre for Social Research in Health, UNSW Sydney, Australia

³ Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Australia

* Indicates joint first author

Background: Concurrent use of methamphetamine and erectile dysfunction medication (EDM; most commonly, Viagra) is associated with HIV seroconversion among gay and bisexual men (GBM). Truvada (and its generic formulations), used for HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), is an effective biomedical HIV prevention strategy. Anecdotally, GBM engaging in intensive sex partying use these drugs to enhance sexual pleasure and longevity, and reduce HIV-related anxiety. We compared men who used Methamphetamine, Truvada, and Viagra (MTV) with those who used methamphetamine and EDM, but not PrEP.

Methods: Flux is an online cohort study of drug use among 1,720 Australian GBM. Logistic regression was used to determine characteristics associated with MTV use. Adjusted odds ratios (aOR) and 95% confidence intervals (95%CI) are reported.

Results: Mean age at baseline was 33.7 years. In the six months prior to baseline, 34.8% used EDM and 13.1% used methamphetamine; 33.8% of men who used EDM also used methamphetamine. PrEP use increased from 0.8% at baseline in June 2015 to 14.2% at last follow-up in March 2017. During this time, men reported 1056 periods in which they used both methamphetamine and EDM but not PrEP, and 172 periods in which they reported MTV. In periods when men used MTV, they were more likely to report condomless anal intercourse with casual partners (aOR 2.51, 95%CI 1.5-4.2) and group sex (aOR 1.78, 95%CI 1.1-2.9), compared with periods when they used methamphetamine and EDM but not PrEP. Having more gay friends was also associated with MTV use (aOR 1.67, 95%CI 1.3-2.2).

Conclusion: MTV use was associated with higher-risk sexual practices and greater social connection with gay community. MTV demonstrates an attempt to simultaneously reduce HIV risk and enhance sexual pleasure within gay sexual subcultures. Targeted harm reduction initiatives need to raise awareness of potential behavioural and physiological impacts of combining these drugs.

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