

SUBSTANTIAL OROPHARYNGEAL INFECTIONS MISSED BY UROGENITAL-ONLY SCREENING FOR GONORRHOEA AMONG HETEROSEXUALS WHO REPORTING CONTACT WITH SEXUAL PARTNERS WITH GONORRHOEA

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Introduction:

Recent evidence has shown that the oropharynx is likely to be the primary driver for gonorrhoea transmission among men who have sex with men, but there have been very limited studies on heterosexuals as oropharyngeal gonorrhoea is not routinely screened for in heterosexuals. The aim of the present study was to examine oropharyngeal gonorrhoea positivity among heterosexuals reporting contact with sexual partners with gonorrhoea.

Methods:

At the Melbourne Sexual Health Centre, all heterosexual individuals reporting contact with sexual partners with gonorrhoea are tested for urogenital gonorrhoea. In May 2017, MSHC also included screening for oropharyngeal gonorrhoea in heterosexuals reporting sexual contact with partners with gonorrhoea. All contacts of gonorrhoea cases among heterosexuals between May 2017 and May 2018 were reviewed. Site-specific gonorrhoea positivity was also calculated.

Results:

A total of 120 heterosexual contacts (72 males and 48 females) were reviewed. The median age was 29 years. The gonorrhoea positivity in male contacts was significantly higher at the oropharynx compared to urethra (18% [95% CI: 10-30%] versus 0% [0-5.0%]; $p < 0.001$); and higher at the oropharynx in female contacts compared to cervicovaginal site 42% [95% CI: 28-57%] versus 31% [95% CI: 19-46%]; $p = 0.555$). Of the 33 female contacts who did not have urogenital gonorrhoea, 12 (36% [95% CI: 20-55%]) tested positive at the oropharynx.

Conclusion:

Approximately 18 and 36% oropharyngeal infections would have been missed in males and females, respectively, by urogenital-only screening among heterosexuals reporting contact with sexual partners with gonorrhoea. Oropharyngeal gonorrhoea screening among heterosexual contacts of GC is important to prevent ongoing transmission.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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