

Negative affect and risk for human immunodeficiency virus : one size may not fit all

Walch, Susan

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Abstrak

Purpose: Research examining the relationship between human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-related risk behavior and negative affective states has netted mixed findings. The present study examined the potential moderating role of gender and sexual orientation on negative affect and HIV-related risk behavior.

Design: Measures of depression, anxiety, and HIV-related risk behavior were collected from participants at the time of pretest counseling. Analysis of variance was used to examine HIV-related risk behavior as a function of negative affect levels and gender and behavioral sexual orientation.

Setting: The study was conducted through a community-based, anonymous HIV counseling and testing site.

Subjects: Participants included 185 consecutively recruited men and women presenting for HIV testing.

Measures: Participants completed a structured interview regarding HIV-related risk behavior, the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depressed Mood Scale, and the Beck Anxiety Inventory.

Results: Greater HIV-related risk behavior was associated with high levels of anxiety and moderate or high levels of depression for bisexual women. Greater HIV-related risk behavior was also associated with low levels of anxiety and mild to moderate levels of depression for bisexual men.

Conclusions: The relationship between negative affective states and HIV-related risk behavior may vary as a function of gender and behavioral sexual orientation. Better understanding of the relationship between negative affect and risk behavior may be achieved through consideration of these sources of variation.