

“Playing with fire”: Decrease in safe-sex attitudes among men who have sex with men in a Portuguese STI clinic

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Miami
2013

Background

- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) present a major public health concern and a global cause of illness in both industrialized and developing countries
 - Portugal is no exception, with an increasing incidence of STIs, and one of the highest prevalences of HIV in Europe
- Reduced risk perceptions among men who have sex with men (MSM) and a consequent high-risk sexual behaviour have been increasingly reported throughout the world

Objective: To characterize the population of MSM attending a STI clinic in Lisbon, and to assess practice of condom use among these patients

 **Method:** Records of all MSM patients attending the clinic from 2008 to 2011 were reviewed

Results



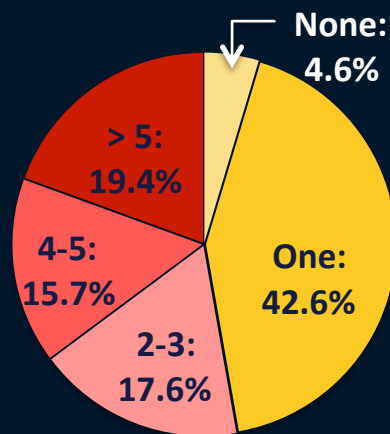
1. Demographic data:

- Median age 32.4 years old (from 17 to 62)
- 76.9% Portuguese men, 20.4% Brazilian
- 71.4% high-school or above education

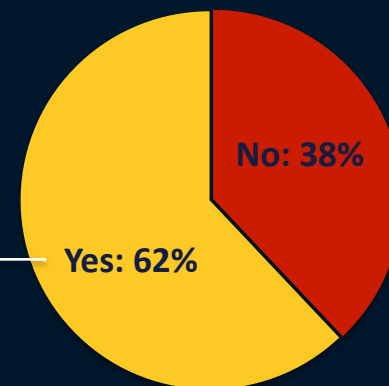
Results

2. Sexual behaviours:

- Partners in the previous 6 months:



- Previous history of STD:



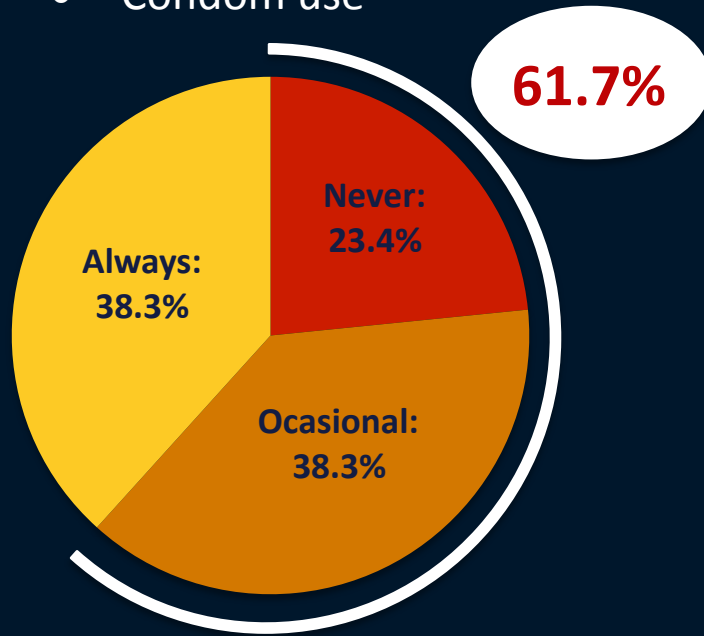
48.6% HIV+ MSM vs 16.6% Heterosexual ($p < 0.001$)

- 1 sex worker (0.9%), 9 assumed sex with sex workers (8.3%)

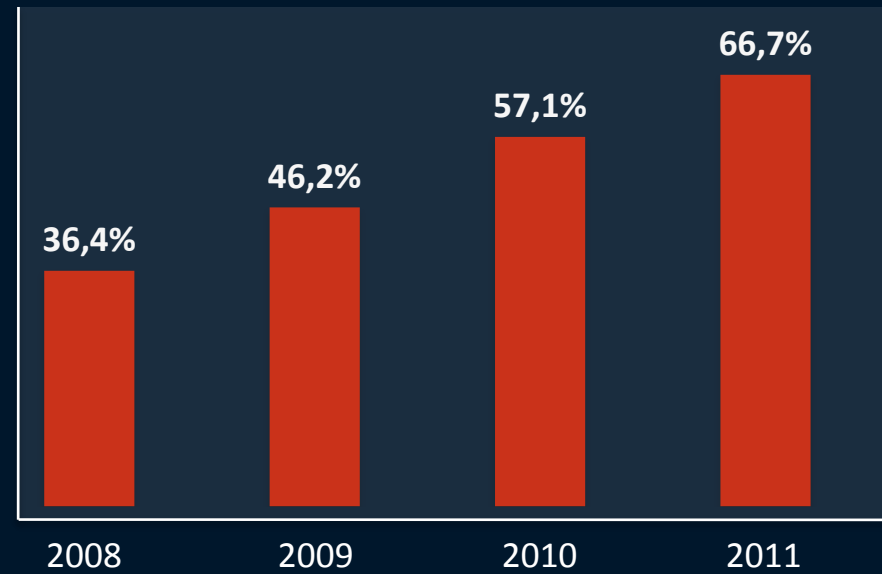
Results

2. Sexual behaviours:

- Condom use



61.7% MSM vs 77.3% Heterosexual
($p=0.008$)



Never/Ocasional condom use

Results

2. Sexual behaviours:

- Condom use:
 - 54.5% of HIV+ MSM do not always use condom, of which 45.8% were not under HAART
 - 49% of HIV+ MSM have multiple partners, of which 68% do not consistently use condom
 - “Always”: 80.6% presented with STDs, namely early syphilis and condylomata acuminata

in Conclusion:

- High-risk sexual behaviours are increasingly prevalent in this MSM population (and possibly underestimated), despite previous educational programmes
- The high incidence of risk behaviours among HIV infected patients is particularly worrisome
- Innovative interventions and subpopulation-based educational programs are needed