Concerns: Anal Cancer

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Few HIV-positive men who have sex with men (MSM) are getting anal pap smears to test for anal cancer or precancerous cell changes. And despite the fact that compared with the general population, MSM with HIV are at greater risk for human papillomavirus (HPV), abnormal cell changes in the anus, and anal cancer, there are still no related national screening guidelines for this group. Researchers studied data from a major surveillance system of people living with HIV and found that between 2009 and 2012, just 11 percent of HIV-positive MSM underwent screening for anal cancer each year. Factors linked with a higher likelihood of receiving screening included being white rather than black, having more frequent viral load tests, having more education, not smoking, having anal sex and receiving care from a clinic with a large HIV patient population.

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