Seven Risk Factors That Can ID Acute HIV in Gay and Bi Men

A risk calculator based on factors such as fever and swollen lymph nodes identified three quarters of early HIV cases in a Dutch cohort.

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A risk calculator based on seven risk factors identified three quarters of men who have sex with men (MSM) with acute (very early) HIV infection in a Dutch cohort, aidsmap reports.

Researchers analyzed data regarding 1,562 MSM in the Amsterdam Cohort Studies, including information the participants provided about their health and sexual behavior. These men tested HIV negative at 17,271 study visits and were diagnosed with acute HIV at 175 visits.

Findings were presented at the 2017 Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Seattle.

The study authors used the data to devise a scoring system such that a combined score of 1.5 or greater suggested a risk of acute infection, calling for an HIV RNA test in addition to an antibody test (the RNA test can detect HIV infection earlier than the antibody test). These were the scores associated with each individual risk factor:

Fever, 1.6

Swollen lymph nodes, 1.5

Oral thrush, 1.7

Weight loss, 0.9

Recent receptive anal sex without a condom, 1.1

More than five recent sexual partners, 0.9

Gonorrhea, 1.6.

The scoring system correctly identified 76 percent of the cases of acute HIV within the cohort. Applying the risk calculator to U.S.-based Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study (MACS), the researchers found that the calculator correctly identified 56 percent of acute infection cases.

To read the aidsmap article, click here.

To read the conference abstract, click here.

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