

# Essential Sexual Health Questions to Ask Adults

Ask all of your adult patients the questions on this card to start the conversation and to begin taking a thorough sexual history. For more questions to assess risk, see Table 1 of “**Sexual Health and Your Patients: A Provider’s Guide.**”

## Ask at Least Annually

Have you been sexually active in the last year?

YES

- What types of sex do you have (oral, vaginal, anal)?
- With men, women, both, or another?
- How many sexual partners have you had?

NO

Have you ever been sexually active?

YES

NO

Continue with medical history.

## Ask Older Adults

Has sex changed for you?  
If so, how?

### Conversational Tips:

- Ensure confidentiality & emphasize this is routine for all patients
- Also, ask open-ended questions, e.g., any sexual concerns or questions you’d like to discuss?
- Be non-judgmental (verbal and non-verbal)

Ask at least once, and update as needed.  
Gender identity and sexual orientation can be fluid.

1. What do you consider yourself to be?
  - A. Lesbian, gay, or homosexual
  - B. Straight or heterosexual
  - C. Bisexual
  - D. Another (please specify)
  - E. Don’t know
2. What is your current gender identity?
  - A. Male
  - B. Female
  - C. Transgender man
  - D. Transgender woman
  - E. Neither exclusively male nor female (e.g. non-binary or nonconforming)
  - F. Another (please specify)
  - G. Decline to answer
3. What sex were you assigned at birth?
  - A. Male
  - B. Female
  - C. Decline to answer

# Recommended Preventive Sexual Health Services for Adults

Service	Females			Males			Transgender Individuals
	18-64	65+	Pregnant	18-64	65+	MSM	
STI Counseling	✓ <sup>a</sup>	✓ <sup>a</sup>	✓ <sup>a</sup>	✓ <sup>a</sup>	✓ <sup>a</sup>	✓ <sup>a</sup>	✓ <sup>a</sup>
Contraceptive Counseling	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Cervical Cancer Screening	✓ <sup>b</sup>	✓ <sup>b</sup>	✓ <sup>b</sup>				✓ <sup>c</sup>
Chlamydia Screening	✓ <sup>d</sup>	✓ <sup>d</sup>	✓ <sup>d</sup>	✓ <sup>e</sup>		✓ <sup>f</sup>	✓ <sup>g</sup>
Gonorrhea Screening	✓ <sup>d</sup>	✓ <sup>d</sup>	✓ <sup>d</sup>			✓ <sup>h</sup>	✓ <sup>g</sup>
HIV Testing	✓	✓ <sup>a</sup>	✓	✓	✓ <sup>a</sup>	✓	✓
Syphilis Screening	✓ <sup>i</sup>	✓ <sup>i</sup>	✓	✓ <sup>i</sup>	✓ <sup>i</sup>	✓	✓ <sup>i</sup>
Hepatitis B Screening	✓ <sup>j</sup>	✓ <sup>j</sup>	✓	✓ <sup>j</sup>	✓ <sup>j</sup>	✓	✓ <sup>j</sup>
Hepatitis C Screening	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hepatitis A Vaccine	✓ <sup>k</sup>	✓ <sup>k</sup>	✓ <sup>k</sup>	✓ <sup>k</sup>	✓ <sup>k</sup>	✓	✓ <sup>k</sup>
Hepatitis B Vaccine	✓ <sup>l</sup>	✓ <sup>l</sup>	✓ <sup>l</sup>	✓ <sup>l</sup>	✓ <sup>l</sup>	✓	✓ <sup>l</sup>
HPV Vaccine	✓ <sup>m</sup>			✓ <sup>m</sup>		✓ <sup>m</sup>	✓ <sup>m</sup>
PrEP	✓ <sup>*</sup>	✓ <sup>*</sup>	✓ <sup>*</sup>	✓ <sup>*</sup>	✓ <sup>*</sup>	✓ <sup>*</sup>	✓ <sup>*</sup>

\* = HIV-negative and at substantial risk for HIV infection (sexual partner with HIV, injection drug user, recent bacterial STI, high number of sex partners, commercial sex worker, lives in high-prevalence area or network)

**a** = At increased risk: inconsistent condom use, multiple partners, partner with concurrent partners, current STI, or history of STI within a year

**b** = Those aged 21-29 every 3 years; and aged 30-65 every 3-5 years

**c** = Male transgender patients who still have a cervix according to guidelines for cisgender women

**d** = Sexually-active women aged <25; women aged ≥25 at increased risk

**e** = Young adult males in high-prevalence communities or settings

**f** = Screen for urethral infection if insertive anal sex in preceding year; rectal infection if receptive anal sex in preceding year

**g** = Screening should take into account the individual's anatomy and sexual practices

**h** = Screen for urethral infection if insertive anal sex in preceding year; rectal infection if receptive anal sex in preceding year; pharyngeal infection if receptive oral sex in preceding year

**i** = HIV-positive; at increased risk: exchange sex for drugs or money; in high prevalence communities

**j** = At risk: HIV-positive, unprotected sex, injection drug users, MSM, family member or sexual partner infected with HBV; born in a HBV-endemic country; born to parents from a HBV-endemic country

**k** = Use illicit drugs; have chronic liver disease; receive clotting factors; travel to HAV-endemic countries; wish to be vaccinated

**l** = At risk: multiple partners, share needles, family member or sexual partner infected with HBV

**m** = Everyone through age 26 years. Some adults aged 27-45 may decide to get the vaccine based on discussions with their clinician if they did not get adequately vaccinated when they were younger

For more information, visit: [nationalcoalitionforsexualhealth.org](http://nationalcoalitionforsexualhealth.org)