

Who's using what?

Drug and alcohol findings from
the National Gay Men's Sex Survey

The annual **Gay Men's Sex Survey** is carried out by **Sigma Research** in collaboration with over a hundred agencies promoting the health of gay men. Over 10,000 men take part each year. Here we look at what you've been telling us about your use of alcohol, tobacco and recreational drugs.

SMOKING

"Do you smoke at all nowadays?"

No **60%** Yes **40%**

"What do you smoke?"

Cigarettes	35%
Cigars	3%
Pipe	under 1%
In joints	11%

Gay men start smoking younger and smoke for longer compared to straight men. Smoking is most common among men with HIV. They're also the most likely to be heavy smokers - despite higher rates of smoking-related illnesses and HIV disease progression in smokers with HIV.

Quitting

68% of men who smoke told us they'd like to stop. Research shows you're ten times more likely to quit smoking if you join a Stop Smoking course and use nicotine replacement products.

Free support for gay men:

London

GMFA: for details of their gay men's stop smoking groups call **020 7738 6872** or visit www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices/courses/gmfa-list

Positive East: 1-1 support for men with HIV wanting to quit. Call **020 7791 2855** or visit www.gaymenswellbeing.com/fresh

Manchester

Lesbian & Gay Foundation: for details of their group call **0161 235 8035** or email stopsmoking@lgf.org.uk

National

You can speak to trained advisers with information on stop smoking medicines, advice on cravings, and local Stop Smoking Services on the free NHS smoking helpline:

0800 022 4332 (7am - 11pm every day)

Also find local services at www.gosmokefree.co.uk

Details of one popular paid-for service can be found at www.allencarr.com

DRINKING

"Have you drunk alcohol at least once in the last year?"

Yes **92%** No **8%**

"On average how often?"

Once or twice in last year	9%
Once or twice a month	16%
Once a week or more	67%

Just over a third of you use alcohol and no other substance. White guys are most likely to drink, with Asian or Muslim men least likely.

Drinking too much?

"I sometimes worry about how much I drink"

Strongly agree	7%
Agree	23%
Not sure	10%
Disagree/strongly disagree	60%

For help with alcohol (for yourself or others):

Drinkline 0800 917 8282 9am-11pm, Monday-Friday
www.downyourdrink.org.uk

<http://drugfucked.tht.org.uk/home/thelowdown/alcohol>

If you're in London check out the information on the next page about the Terrence Higgins Trust's Drugfucked groups and specialist drug and alcohol counselling.

POPPERS

More than half of you have used poppers at least once in the last 12 months, with around 1 in 10 using them once a week or more. The survey shows poppers are second in popularity only to alcohol and are as popular as smoking. Men in their 30s and 40s, guys with more sexual partners and men with HIV are most likely to use them.

% of men using a drug at least once in the last year

Cannabis	26%	Speed	10%	LSD/acid	4%
Ecstasy	20%	Tranquilisers	9%	Crack cocaine	4%
Cocaine	20%	GHB	7%	Heroin	3%
Ketamine	12%	Crystal meth	5%		

Research has made a link between an increased risk of getting HIV and using poppers when being fucked without a condom by a man with HIV. It's believed this is due to poppers making blood rush into blood vessels in the arse, meaning anal bleeding is more likely.

18% of you have been fucked without a condom while sniffing poppers.

8% have done this with a man whose HIV status you didn't know or believed was different to your own.

Find out more about poppers and HIV at:
www.chapsonline.org.uk/biology

This booklet in gay venues explains the link between poppers and HIV, and other ways HIV can be passed on during gay sex.



CHEMS

'Chems', 'party drugs', 'PnP'... whatever you call them our survey shows large numbers of you use recreational drugs.

Around a third of alcohol drinkers hadn't used anything else, but among other men using more than one drug was the norm. Men in the North of England and Northern Ireland are most likely to use speed. Londoners have the highest use of cocaine, GHB, E, Ketamine, cannabis, poppers, tranquilisers, crystal meth and Viagra-type drugs. 17% of men across the country had used Viagra. Men with over 30 partners a year and guys in their 20s and 30s are most likely to use the drugs surveyed, except for Viagra - use of that is highest in men over 50. HIV positive men are a lot more likely to use all the drugs - except booze.

Need more control over your drug use?

We asked you if "I sometimes worry about my recreational drug use."

Highest levels of concern are among men using ketamine and GHB (38%), crystal meth (39%) and crack (40%).

Users of poppers (18%) and cannabis (21%) are the least concerned.

If you've got questions about your drug or alcohol use

www.tht.org.uk/drugfucked

This site covers everything you need to know about alcohol and drugs (including steroids, poppers and Viagra), safer drug taking, drugs and your sex life, mixing your chems, reactions with HIV meds, and much more. And you can email questions to a drugs expert.

Group sessions for men concerned with their drinking or drug use

Terrence Higgins Trust is running a series of FREE groups in London (one for HIV positive men only) that allow gay and bisexual men to share experiences around their drinking or drug taking and learn how to get more control over it.

Drugfucked

10.00-12.30pm on the second Saturday of the month (one day only).

Totally drugfucked

Tuesdays 6.30pm-9pm (six weeks from September 2nd).

Positively drugfucked (for men with HIV)

10am-12.30pm on the fourth Saturday of the month (one day only).

For details of how to take part, go to www.tht.org.uk and search for 'Drugfucked' where you'll find links to the three groups.

One to one support

Terrence Higgins Trust also has specialist drug and alcohol counselling (up to 12 free weekly sessions). These can help you get more control over your drug taking or drinking. To find out more call **0207 812 1777**.

You can find out what's available for men worried about their drug or alcohol use from your local gay men's health project (numbers are listed on the next page) and *Antidote* at the Hungerford Project. This is a London service but they can point you towards services more local to you. Phone: **0207 437 3523**

www.thehungerford.org/antidote.asp

What is the National Gay Men's Sex Survey?

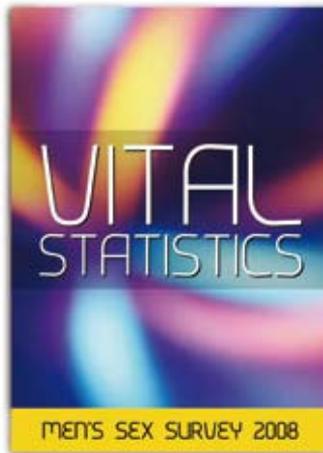
Each year since 1997 Sigma Research has asked gay men about their sex lives and the things they need to keep it safer. Using booklets and internet questionnaires, it's the biggest survey of its kind in the world. It's part of the Terrence Higgins Trust co-ordinated CHAPS programme and is funded by the Department of Health. The information is used to plan sexual health promotion and HIV prevention for gay men.

The figures you've seen here are taken from the 2005, 2006 and 2007 surveys. Figures over 2% have been rounded up to the nearest percentage point.

The published surveys are available on www.sigmaresearch.org.uk or from **Sigma Research** on **020 7820 8022** (or email gary.hammond@sigmaresearch.org.uk)

This year's survey is running until September. Look out for this questionnaire in your local gay venue or fill in the survey at www.vitalstatistics.org.uk

You can talk to someone about anything to do with sex or HIV and sexual health or help with your drinking or drug use at **THT Direct 0845 12 21 200** (10am-10pm weekdays, midday until 6pm weekends).



Local support and information:

Leicester

TRADE
0116 254 1747

Liverpool

Armistead Project
0870 990 8996

London

GMFA
020 7738 6872

Manchester

Lesbian & Gay Foundation
0161 235 8035

Plymouth

Eddystone Trust
01752 257 077

Yorkshire

Yorkshire Mesmac
0113 244 4209

Sheffield Centre for HIV & Sexual Health
0114 226 1907

And Terrence Higgins Trust centres in: **the Midlands, Brighton, Bristol, Cardiff, London, Oxfordshire and Swansea.**

For details, call

THT DIRECT  **0845 12 21 200**