Prevention of HIV Infection Among Asian MSM

Frank Y. Wong, Ph.D.
Georgetown University

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Outline

• APIs and HIV in the United States
• API MSM: The impact of HIV and the trajectory of the disease
• Risk behaviors
• Intervention strategies
• Research gaps/needs in this population
APIs in the United States

- Foreign born: 73.5% of APIs in the US in 2000
- Over 70% of immigrants from India, the Philippines, China, and Vietnam in 2003
- 4.1% of the US population in 2004

Figure 5. Percent Distribution of Selected Detailed Asian Groups by Alone or in Combination Population: 2000
(For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf1.pdf)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, special tabulations.

http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/race/ppl-146.html
HIV/AIDS Among the United States API Population

- 81% of API population diagnosed in 2005 were men.
- 61.4% of API population diagnosed from 1985 to 2002 were foreign-born

CDC: http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/resources/factsheets/API.htm
Increasing Risks for API: Low HIV Testing Rates

- CDC’s Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System
  - APIs are as prone to HIV-related risk behaviors as other racial/ethnic groups
  - Significantly less likely than others to report having been tested for HIV

- HIV testing survey in Seattle
  - 90% of API perceived themselves at risk
  - 47% had been tested
Increasing Risks for AP: Low HIV Testing Rates

- Percentage of individuals in 2004 who received an AIDS diagnosis within one year after HIV diagnosis
  - APIs = 44%
  - Whites = 37%
  - Blacks = 40%
  - American Indians/Alaska Natives = 41%
  - Hispanics = 43%

- Increasing testing prevalence allows for earlier treatment and reduced rates of transmission
Increasing Risks for API: Low HIV Testing Rates

- In an HIV testing and awareness study, Wong et al. found that APIs tended to receive their first HIV test when they got sick (infection has already advanced beyond the latent stage).
- This late/delayed testing is related to the fast progression of the disease in these individuals.
API American Men Who Have Sex with Men

- 61.3% of all API with HIV are MSM
- Cumulative AIDS Cases among US MSM with HIV:
  - API = 72% (highest among all other racial/ethnic minority groups other than white)

http://www.aemaps.org/participate.html
Emerging HIV Epidemic Among API MSM in San Francisco

- Overall HIV prevalence = nearly 3%
- Prevalence as high as 10% for Thai MSM
- 47% reported having had unprotected anal intercourse in the past 6 months
- 63% used illicit drugs in past 6 months
- 34% had sex under the influence of illicit drugs in the past 6 months
Risk Behaviors Among API MSM

During 1999 to 2002:

• Unprotected anal intercourse with two or more sex partners of unknown HIV serostatus in the past six months increased from 6% to 16%

• Incidence of rectal gonorrhea for API men increased from 200 to 800 per 100,000
DC MAPS

• DC Men of Asia Prevention Study
• Sociocultural forces, stigma and sexuality, HIV-risk attitudes and behaviors
• Statistics from the study indicate that of the 63% of participants who self-reported being tested in the U.S. for HIV, 4.26% had tested positive
Challenges

- Sex and drugs are both serious taboos in Asian culture
- Being gay is strongly stigmatized by most Asian societies
- Effect of the migration experience on sexual health and behaviors of APIs
Interventions: I

- 3-hr group counseling session in culturally appropriate setting with 329 homosexual API
- Single, 3-hr skills training group or wait-list control
- Four components:
  - (1) develop positive self-identity & social support
  - (2) education for safer sex
  - (3) eroticizing safer sex
  - (4) negotiating safer sex
- Results:
  - Number of partners decreased by 46% at 3 mo.
  - Chinese and Filipino men reduced unprotected anal intercourse by more than half
Interventions: II

• Single-session small group workshop\textsuperscript{23}
  – Provide social support, increase ethnicity identity esteem, enhance safer sex education, improve attitude and efficacy in engaging in safer sex
  – Trying to enhance dual identity, promote safe sex norms, and provide support networks
Interventions: III

• Bridges Project (New York)\textsuperscript{24}
  – Developed at the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS, INC (APICHA)
  – Assists HIV-seropositive APIs in overcoming barriers to utilization of HIV-related medical and supportive services
  – Undocumented and Asian-primary-language participants experienced improvement in service utilization experiences after enrollment
Interventions: IV

• Aimed to implement interventions that utilized culturally appropriate protective factors:

• Targeted two groups of API MSM: HIV-positives, and HIV-negative youth (between 18 and 24)

• After focus group intervention, follow-up found significant reductions in number of men who:
  – didn’t discuss condom use, safe sex, monogamy, and partner’s HIV status
  – had unprotected receptive anal sex
Research Needs

• There is still a significant lack of knowledge about API MSM, especially due to the fact that a majority are foreign born

• Much more research needs to be done on this population in order to effectively implement interventions
Men of Asia & the Pacific
Testing for HIV

• Goals:
  – Estimate the prevalence and incidence of HIV infection among API MSM
  – Describe the socio-cultural and individual-level correlates of HIV testing and knowledge of HIV infection status among API MSM
  – Examine the socio-cultural and individual-level of correlates of HIV risk among API MSM
  – Evaluate a consortium model framework for conducting scientific, community-based HIV research
MATH Research Team

• Research Team from
  – Georgetown University
  – Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum, San Francisco, CA
  – Seven community partners in five cities (Boston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, New York City, San Francisco)
What Are We Doing?

• Target Population
  – Self-identified MSM ages 18 and above (N = 2,400)

• Ethnicity
  – Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, South Asian (Indian), Vietnamese
  – Self-identified as one of the API groups
What Are We Doing?

• Testing Technology
  – OraSure, Western Blot

• Behavioral Survey

• Recruitment
  – Venue-based
  – Respondent-driven sampling
US Security Issues of the Disease

• United States-Asia air bridge
  – 23% increase in number of Asian travelers to the US from 2003-2006 ²⁰
  – 75.3% of APIs in the US are foreign born²¹
  – 16.9% increase in prevalence of HIV in Asia from 2003-2005 ²²

• Passive surveillance system
  – API under-utilize the health care system (due to cultural barriers and lack of access)

²⁰: http://tinet.ita.doc.gov/
Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Prevention
   - Early testing is essential

2. Intervention
   - More models must be implemented and evaluated

3. Methodology
   - To estimate the magnitude of the HIV situation among API MSM, appropriate methodologies for a small yet diverse population must be employed
References

References


