Factors Associated with Mpox Symptoms and Testing Among Men Who Have Sex With Men in the United States, August 2022

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BACKGROUND

- Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM) are disproportionately affected by mpox
- Structural determinants drive inequitable mpox outcomes among historically marginalized communities

Objectives

- Examine characteristics associated with mpox-related symptoms and testing
- Describe barriers and facilitators to mpox testing among GBMSM with symptoms who did not test

METHODS

- **August 5-15, 2022**: mpox survey with prior American Men's Internet Survey (AMIS) participants (n=824)
- Estimated the prevalence of **mpox symptoms** (fever or rash/sores with unknown cause, past 3 months) and associated factors via modified Poisson regression
- Described demographic and behavioral characteristics of GBMSM **who reported mpox testing**
- Among GBMSM with symptoms **who did not test**, summarized testing self-efficacy, barriers, facilitators

Persistent disparities in mpox testing among GBMSM mirror those of other epidemics,
suggesting a need for targeted efforts to reach rural GBMSM, GBMSM of color, and GBMSM living with HIV.

RESULTS

- 126/824 GBMSM (15.3%) reported at least one mpox symptom (Fig. 1a)
- Increased prevalence of symptoms associated with condomless anal sex (CAS; aPR 1.53, 95% CI 1.06-2.20)
- Nine GBMSM (1.1%) reported mpox testing and most were non-Hispanic white and in urban areas, with recent STI testing, 2+ partners, group sex, and CAS (Fig. 2)
- Among GBMSM with symptoms but no testing, 55% had high testing self-efficacy
- Location, appointment ease, hours, and cost may have shaped testing uptake (Fig. 3)

CONCLUSIONS

- There is a need for sustained messaging and interventions to promote testing awareness and increase access to convenient, low-cost mpox services
- An mpox-neutral approach could integrate mpox testing and vaccination within PrEP and STI programs
- Targeted outreach is needed to reduce barriers to mpox services for GBMSM in rural areas, GBMSM of color, and GBMSM living with HIV.

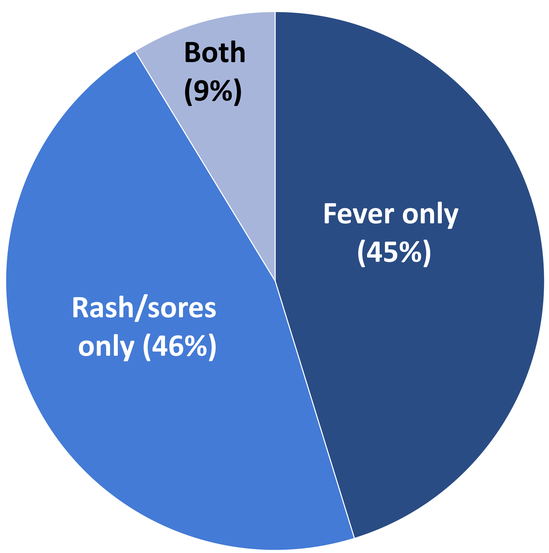

Figure 1. Types of mpox symptoms reported by GBMSM in the U.S. (n=126).

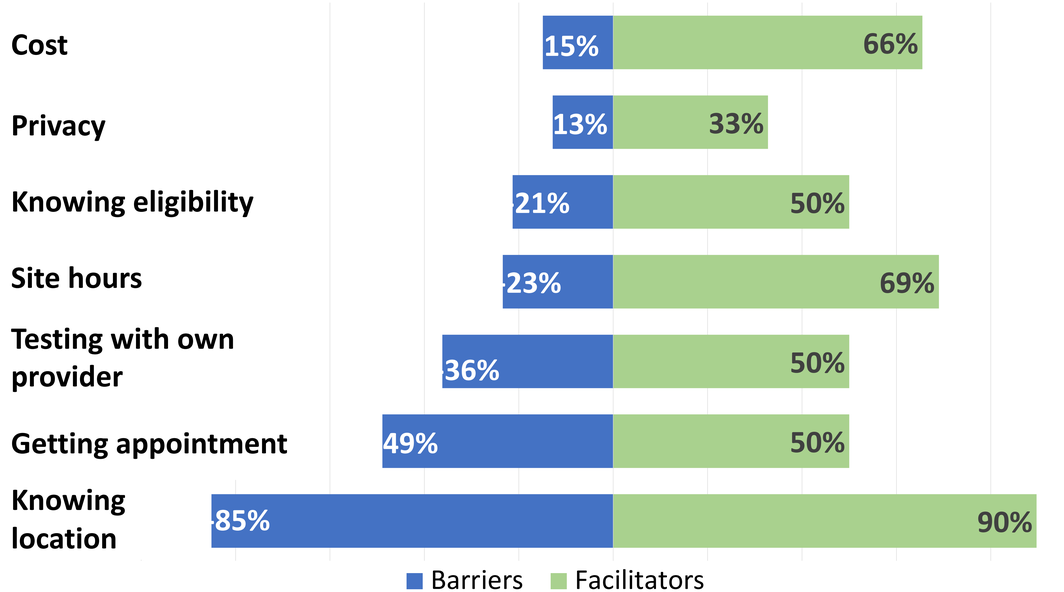

Figure 3. Barriers and facilitators to mpox testing among GBMSM with mpox symptoms but no testing (n=105).

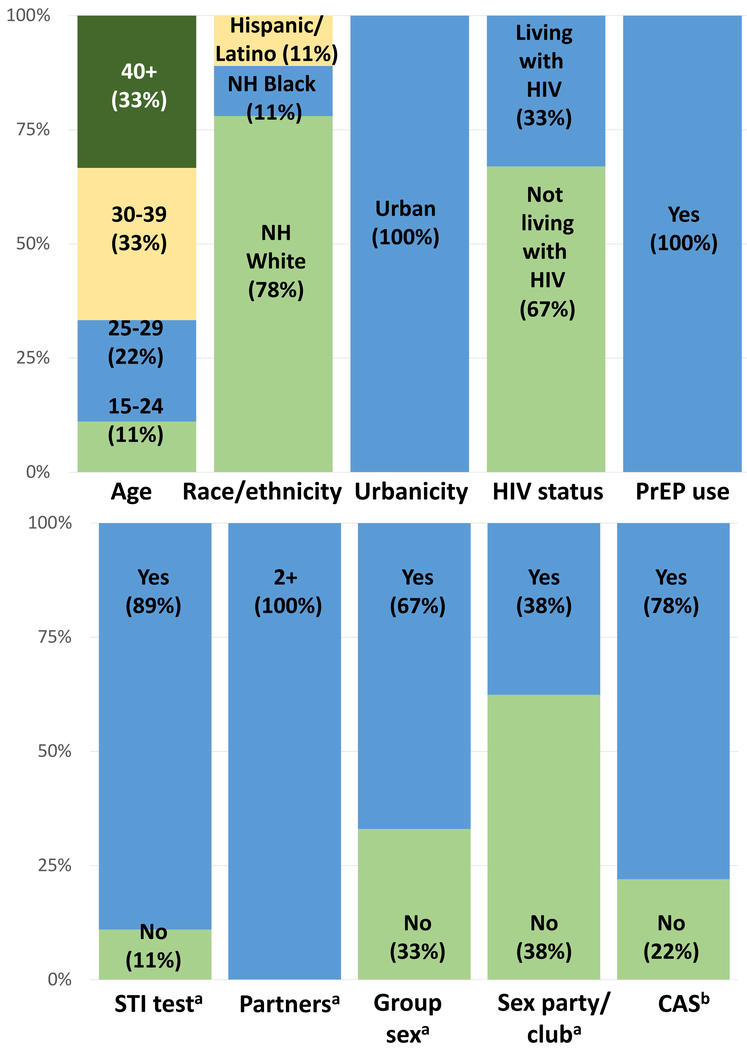

Figure 2. Characteristics of GBMSM who reported mpox testing (n=9). [a]Last 3 months; [b]Last 12 months.