

MATH: Men of Asia and the Pacific Testing for HIV

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Project Description

The Men of Asia Testing for HIV (MATH) study is a national collaboration between several community-based organizations, health centers, academic institutions, laboratories, and health agencies. Funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, this project will study the HIV prevalence, incidence, and behavioral correlates of HIV infection among 2,000 Asian and Pacific Islander (API) men who have sex with men (MSM). In other words, we are studying the scope of the HIV epidemic among API MSM and who is at risk for becoming infected.

Participants are recruited into the study by community partners, and participants also refer other eligible people; they may be residents of any of five US metropolitan areas (New York, Boston, Philadelphia, San Francisco Bay Area, and Los Angeles). The study visit involves completing a behavioral survey and taking an oral rapid HIV test; those who preliminarily test positive also have blood drawn for confirmatory testing and virological studies.

Our major research questions include:

- Which social and cultural risk and resiliency factors are associated with HIV infection among API MSM?
 - How do international travel and immigration patterns affect HIV risk?
- Who gets tested for HIV and what sociocultural factors impact HIV testing patterns (including being aware of one's HIV status and late stage HIV testing)?

Interesting Findings

- Mean and median age of men participating were both 33
- Only 20% reported that English was the language with which they were most comfortable
- 70% were born outside the US mainland
- Ethnic identification included:
 - Filipino (41.7%)
 - Chinese (13.9%)
 - Japanese (9.7%)
 - Vietnamese (9.7%)
 - Indian (4.2%)
- 36% reported lifetime bisexual behavior
- Sexual identity
 - 76.4% identified as gay
 - 8.3% as bisexual
 - 4.2% as straight
 - 2.8% as queer.
- 73.6% reported prior HIV testing, although the average time since the last test was 4.6 years
- 25 men (34.7%) tested positive for HIV infection, including 22 who already knew they were HIV+

Project Recruitment Dates: September 2006 - July 2009

Project End Date: September 2009