



CENTER FOR AIDS PREVENTION STUDIES (CAPS)  
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### NSHS Questionnaire Guidelines

Attached is a copy of the National Sexual Health Survey (NSHS) questionnaire. Telephone interviews were administered to over 7,700 respondents age 18 and older living in the continental United States between July 1995 and April 1996. The questionnaire was administered using Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) software. In written form, the attached questionnaire reflects the computer assisted telephone interview.

#### General Guidelines

Any questions ending with the instruction (READ) means that all appropriate response categories were read aloud to the respondent. If a question did not end with the instruction (READ), then no responses were read aloud.

**Boldfaced** responses (e.g., "Don't know") were never read to the respondents.

Instructions for skip patterns are **CAPITALIZED AND BOLDFACED**. They appear in boxes in the text or in [brackets] if attached to particular response categories. If the response of interest is a number provided by the respondent, then the skip pattern is given in a phrase immediately following the response field.

Questions asking the respondent to rate "likelihood," "importance," or "agreement" employed an initial question followed by a prompt to elicit a response. For example, in question 18A, the respondent is first asked if he or she would be likely or unlikely to use an HIV home test kit. The prompt then elicits *how* likely or unlikely that event would be.

Special instructions to the interviewer about the scope or content of a question or its response are also [**boldface and bracketed**] (e.g., see question 11B). **PROBES** and **PROMPTS** are clearly marked.

#### Alternative Text

In many cases, questions offer alternative text options. The most basic examples are text that varies by the sex of the respondent's partner (e.g., him/her) or whether the respondent is still

having sex with a given partner (e.g., was/is). In most cases, alternative text options should be self explanatory, and will appear (in parentheses/separated by a slash). The exception is alternative text related to "casual sexual partners." Many questions that are asked about respondents' sexual partners contain wording that does not apply to "casual partners" (specifically, "one-night stands"). We have therefore provided alternative wording for questions that do not make sense for a partner the respondent knew only briefly. These cases are indicated by [brackets] with a slash separating the regular text from the casual partner alternative, which is always in *italics* [regular text/*casual partner alternative*]. A special preamble, which appears entirely in *italics* was read to the respondent before any questions were asked using the casual partner alternative text. Question 39 is an example of both the preamble and the text.

### **Sexual Partners**

There are three (3) separate sections in the sexual partner series; one for opposite gender partners (questions 30 through 65), one for male same gender partners (questions 66 through 106), and one for female same gender partners (questions 107 through 140). Respondents were asked about opposite gender partners first and then about same gender partners. All of the questions in a section were repeated for each partner up to 10 partners, starting with the most recent partner. Thus, a bisexual respondent could have answered questions about as many as 20 partners. For respondents who listed 6 or more partners of a given gender in the past year, the series was shortened (in the interest of time) for partner 6 and higher. There are skip instructions throughout the Sexual Partner Series for partners 6-10.