

# Several health indicators differ for LBG, heterosexual adults

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Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) adults differ from heterosexual adults

on several health indicators, according to a study published online May 25 in the *National Health Statistics Reports*, a publication from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Kevin C. Heslin, Ph.D., and Johanna M. Alfier, M.P.H., from the National Center for Health Statistics in Hyattsville, Maryland, examined measures of access to care and [health status](#), behaviors, and beliefs among LGB adults compared to heterosexual adults using data from multiple years of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES: 2005 to 2018), National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG: 2011 to 2019), and National Health Interview Survey (NHIS: 2013 to 2018).

The authors note that LGB adults differed from heterosexual adults on several health indicators across the three data systems. Compared with heterosexual people, [bisexual men](#) and women, gay men, and [lesbian women](#) reported smoking and heavy drinking (NHIS) and using marijuana and illicit stimulants (NSFG) more often. Lesbian and [bisexual women](#) reported diagnoses of arthritis, asthma, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension more often than heterosexual women (NHIS); bisexual women more often reported having ever been diagnosed with endometriosis, ovulation or menstrual problems, and pelvic inflammatory disease (NSFG). For men and women, anthropometric measures from NHANES also differed by sexual orientation.

"Combined, the results of this research can inform the development of health programs and policies to target and reduce disparities by sexual orientation and promote health equity," the authors write.

**More information:** [CDC's National Health Statistics Reports](#)



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