

LGBTQ+ HEALTH DISPARITIES

Although LGBTQ individuals are at increased risk for depression, anxiety, suicide, obesity and eating disorders, heart disease, breast and cervical cancers, and tobacco and alcohol addiction, many LGBTQ individuals avoid seeking critical health care because of their stigmatizing experiences with doctors and nurses. To reduce these disparities, health care should be inclusive and respectful, and recognize the impact that chronic stress, discrimination, violence, and poverty has on LGBTQ adults and teens.



KEY DEFINITIONS

- **Allostatic load:** The cumulative burden of chronic stress on metabolic, immune, inflammatory, and cardiovascular systems.
- **Social determinants of health:** The conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.
- **LGBTQIA+:** Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and others



ACTION ITEMS

- Talk openly about sexual orientation and gender identity with patients, ask about chronic stressors, and experiences with discrimination or violence. These are important social determinants of health.
- Establish a safe and welcoming environment for LGBTQ patients and encourage them to get preventative screenings.
- Ensure medical records acknowledges the gender identity and chosen name of the patient.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Human Rights Campaign National LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center
- GLAAD LGBT Health and Health Care
- LGBTQ Health Research: Theory, Methods, Practice