DRINKING & HIV-RISK IN MSM IN THE LAB & “REAL” WORLD

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STUDYING DRINKING & HIV-RISK IN THE LAB

what we're up to now.
Approach:
- Alcohol administration to study cognitive and emotional changes, effects on sexual decision-making
- Uses a “hypothetical” sexual scenario to explore decisions

Advantages:
- Allows us to explore risk decision-making in very “high resolution”
- Gives us a window into exactly what changes when MSM are intoxicated that leads to more risk
- Can help us focus the limited time in alcohol/HIV-risk interventions to specific aspects affected
ALCOHOL & HIV-RISK IN THE LAB

LIMITATIONS:

– It’s not the “real world”
– Little is known about whether decisions in the lab are similar to what participants actually do
– Could be some differences here

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what we hope to do in the future.
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RATIONALE:
- Study changes that happen when MSM drink in the real world that puts them at more risk in the hours that follow
- How drinking fits in with other risk factors
- Methods needed are more accessible and affordable than ever
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APPROACH:

- Using ecological momentary assessment (EMA), we conducted a pilot study with 12 very high-risk MSM.
- Participants completed:
  - 1 daily diary assessment each morning
  - An assessment each time they began drinking/drug use
  - 6 experience sampling prompts between 9 a.m. and midnight
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APPROACH:

From this pilot study, we've shown:

- Doing intensive assessments are feasible
- Minimal reactivity
- Drinking and/or intoxication does not change adherence or reliability
- Assessing behavior closer to occurrence may produce more accurate data than recall measures (even at <30 days)

Using Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) to Study Sex Events Among Very High-Risk Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)

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ADVANTAGES:

- Ecological validity
- Data available on many risk factors, can determine what’s most important
- Data provided on smartphones can help us intervene on smartphones
- Connecting EMA to data provided in the lab
QUESTIONS?

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http://www.brown.edu/academics/medical/alcohol-research-center-on-hiv/