

Gays, lesbians have better health than bisexuals: Study

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Washington:Â Bisexual males and females report poorer health than gays, lesbians and heterosexuals (LGBs), according to a study by sociologists at Rice University.

The study examined the self-rated health of 10,128 sexual minorities (gay, lesbian and bisexual adults) and 405,145 heterosexual adults to see how it differed across sexual orientation.

"We developed this study both to examine the health of these different sexual minority groups and to assess how risk factors for poor health contribute to their overall health," said lead author Bridget Gorman, a professor of sociology at Rice University.

The study found that 19.5 percent of bisexual men and 18.5 percent of bisexual women rated their health as "poor or fair", the highest proportion among the groups surveyed.

But only 11.9 percent of men identifying as gay and 10.6 percent of women identifying as lesbian rated their health as "poor or fair," the lowest proportion of those surveyed.

Bisexual men and women are disproportionately disadvantaged on important social, economic and behavioural factors strongly associated with health and well-being, found the study.

Bisexual men and women were more likely to smoke (23.8 percent and 21.9 percent, respectively), compared with 14.9 percent of gay men, 16.6 percent of lesbian women, 11.1 percent of heterosexual men and 8.3 percent of heterosexual women.

"Our study illustrates the importance of examining health status among specific sexual minority groups, and not among 'sexual minorities' in the aggregate, since the health profile of bisexual adults differs substantially from that of gay and lesbian adults," Gorman said.

The study appeared in the journal Demography.

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