

# One year after their commercialization in France, who are the MSM who are using HIV self-tests? Preliminary results from the V3T study "VIH: Teste-Toi Toi-même"

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## INTRODUCTION



- In France, the first HIV self-test hit the market in September 2015
  - Finger-stick blood
  - Available over the counter in pharmacies and on pharmacy websites
- Expected to increase uptake and frequency of HIV testing mainly in key populations. But does the HIV self-test reach this target?
- Objectives:** One year after its commercialization, who is interested in and has used HIV self-tests?

## METHODS

- An online survey launched on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2016
- Questions on knowledge, interest and use of HIV self-tests, sexual behaviour and other HIV risks, access to health care.
- People aged  $\geq 18$  living in France and French overseas departments (where HIV prevalence and stigmatisation are high) informed about the study using:
  - Banners on community and dating websites
  - Banners on community Facebook pages
  - Ads in community mailing lists
  - Ads in community paper magazines
  - Flyers in community venues
  - Oral information during prevention and testing interventions of the NGOs fighting against AIDS

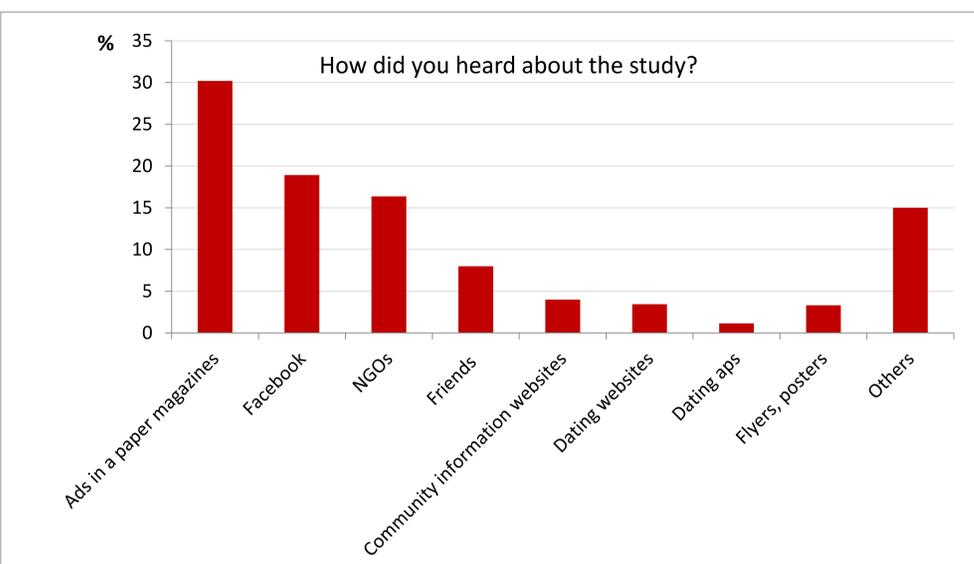


→ The current paper presents preliminary results concerning the first thousand MSM who completed the online survey.

## RESULTS

### Results of the communication campaign

The first thousand MSM were included within four weeks after launching the study online. The study benefited from the communication around the world AIDS day.



### Participants' profile

#### The first thousand MSM

- Median age 32 (IQR=25-42)
- Mostly (92%) born in mainland France: (1% in French overseas departments and 7% in other countries)
- Well educated: 58% had university level education

### Health data

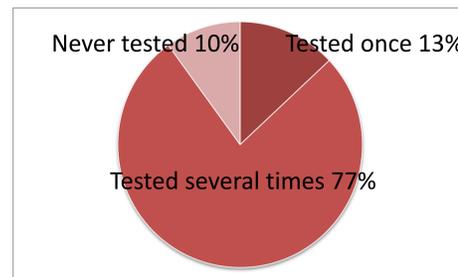
- 64% declared seeing a doctor more than once year; 17% less than once a year
- 1% (n=10) were HIV positive

### Knowledge about HIV

- >80% gave correct answers concerning HIV transmission routes
- >50% knew they had to wait 6 to 12 weeks after a possible HIV exposure to be sure of a negative test result
- >50% were aware that people taking HIV treatments do not transmit HIV

## RESULTS

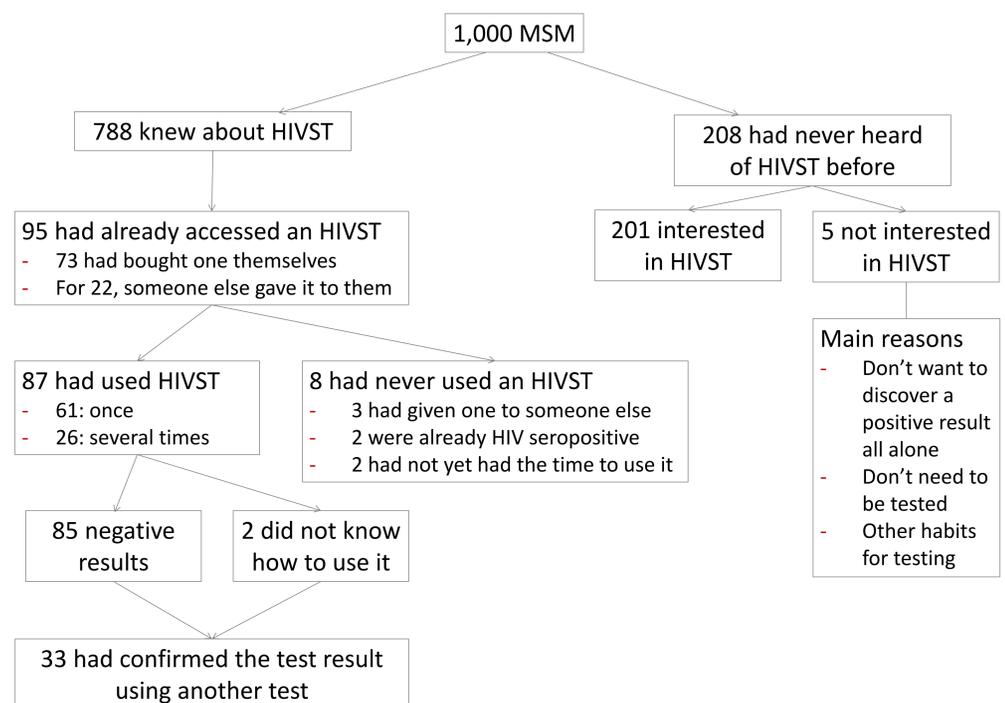
### Lifetime HIV testing



Median time since last HIV test: 6.4 months (IQR=2.5-15.0)

Median number of HIV tests in the last 12 months: 1 (IQR:1-2)

### Knowledge, purchase and use of HIV self-tests (HIVST) prior to the V3T study



### Users were satisfied of the HIVST

- 71% planned to use it again in the future
- 89% would recommend it to a friend or family member

### Sexual behaviour

- 89% defined themselves as homosexual; 9% as heterosexual
  - 5% had had sex with both men and women in the past 12 months
- 51% lived their sex lives with men openly, 42% discreetly, and 7% hidden or in the absolute secrecy
- Partners and condom use in the past 6 months
  - 541 (54%) had  $\geq 1$  steady partner
  - 842 (84%) had  $\geq 1$  casual partner
  - 85% did not use condoms consistently
  - 64% did not use condoms consistently
- Concurrent relationship
  - 74% of MSM with a steady partners declared also having casual partners
  - 54% of MSM with steady partners, thought or knew that their steady partners had others sexual partners

## DISCUSSION / CONCLUSION

- Communicating via Facebook, NGOs or articles in community magazines was more effective to recruit MSM into the study than using banners on dating websites and apps.
- The first thousand MSM to participate in the survey were well-educated, had good knowledge of HIV transmission routes and took good care of their health:
  - regular visits in physicians
  - annual HIV testing
- The majority were living their homosexuality openly
- Most MSM reported inconsistent condom use with a risk of being exposed to HIV
- 79% knew of the existence of HIV self-tests before participating in the study
  - 9% had already accessed an HIV self-test
  - 92% of those who had accessed had already used it
  - Only two reported not having been able to use it correctly