WHAT CAN I DO TO TAKE CARE OF MY HEALTH?

GET SCREENED
Gay and bi men should receive the same cancer screenings that are recommended for other men. Talk to your doctor and complete all recommended screenings.

FIND A PROVIDER YOU TRUST
Your sexual orientation affects your risks for cancer in lots of ways. It’s critical that your doctor knows your sexual orientation, your sexual practices, and more about your life and potential risks. If you don’t feel that your doctor is receptive or knowledgeable about this, you can search for a new one as well as find cancer screening services, and get help if you face discrimination at healthcarebillofrights.org/-gethelp.

REDUCE YOUR RISK
You can reduce your risk for cancer by doing the following:

» Stay smoke free, as cigarettes increase risks for many types of cancer.
» Keep a healthy diet and exercise, as being overweight can increase risk.
» Use preventive care, such as getting check-ups and cancer screenings.
» Get vaccinated. HPV and hepatitis B infection can increase cancer risk, but getting vaccinated can prevent infection. Find additional information at cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/prevention/vaccination.htm.
» Practice safer sex, as HPV is sexually transmitted and can cause cancer.
» Reduce sun exposure and avoid tanning bed use to prevent skin cancer.

WHAT CANCER RISK DO I FACE AS A GAY, BI OR QUEER MAN?

ANAL CANCER
Gay and bi men have 3.4 times the rate of anal cancer as do heterosexual men. Gay and bi men who are living with HIV have 30 times the risk of anal cancer.

SKIN CANCER
Gay and bi men also have 50% higher odds of getting skin cancer compared to heterosexual men. This may be related to increased use of indoor tanning to improve body image.

LUNG CANCER
Since smoking rates are higher among gay and bi men than other men, they may have higher risks of lung cancer.

OTHER CANCERS
Gay and bi men are at risk for the same cancers that other men face (e.g., prostate, testicular), as well as cancers that all adults face (e.g., colon, liver, pancreatic).
WHY IS CANCER A PARTICULAR CONCERN FOR LGBT PEOPLE?

LGBT people, including trans individuals, have several RISK FACTORS that may put them at higher risk.

SMOKING is the most preventable cause of cancer and death. LGBT people smoke at a rate that is 50% higher than other adults. Smoking kills 30,000+ LGBT people every year.

ALCOHOL USE, POOR EATING HABITS, AND LACK OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY increase your cancer risk, and LGBT people on average engage in higher-risk behavior than other individuals.

LOW USE OF PREVENTIVE CARE occurs because some LGBT people avoid care until they are sick. Getting regular check-ups and screenings is key to preventing cancer.

CANCER AND GAY, BISEXUAL & QUEER MEN

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Additional fact sheets and references for this document can be found at LgbtHealthlink.org/fact-sheets