

Homosexuality

Homosexual individuals are sexually, romantically, and emotionally attracted to **individuals of the same sex**. Homosexuality occurs in both men and women. In addition to sexual behavior, it is also associated with feelings and identity. The occurrence of homosexuality in the female population is estimated at 1%, and in the male population, at a minimum of 2%.

American psychologist Alfred Kinsey stated in the late 1940s that he found homosexual orientation in about 4% of the examined men. However, such a high incidence has not been reliably documented in the general population since then. Nevertheless, the **four percent** has become well-established in the public consciousness. With the aforementioned occurrence, homosexually oriented people are the most numerous sexual minority in the population overall.

According to the long-standing consensus of behavioral and social sciences and health professions and professions related to mental health, homosexuality in itself is a normal variant of human sexual orientation^[1].



Rainbow flag - a symbol of homosexuals

Homosexuality vs. Homosexual Behavior

It is necessary to distinguish between **homosexual behavior** and **homosexuality** as an internal sexual orientation. **Not every homosexual behavior is motivated by a different sexual orientation**. This is true, for example, for substitute homosexual contacts of *prisoners*. Likewise, *prostitution* is often practiced by men and women who themselves are heterosexually oriented. Finally, not every homosexually oriented individual also engages in homosexual behavior.

Bisexuality

Bisexuality is the state when an individual cannot precisely state which of the two genders they are sexually attracted to. However, there are extremely **few** such truly bisexual individuals among men and women. Homosexually oriented people sometimes have a tendency to refer to themselves as bisexuals to make the existence of their homosexual orientation more socially acceptable where public opinion is not very positive towards homosexual people.

Attitudes Towards Homosexual People

Psychosocial and cultural **attitudes towards homosexual people** have changed significantly. In recent times, we have known societies in the world where homosexual behavior is criminalized. This applies primarily to sexual intercourse between men ("sodomy," "pederasty" as punishable acts). Other societies take a non-committal stance towards homosexuality, and a number of developed countries have legally recognized same-sex marriages or civil unions, in which partners have almost identical rights to those of opposite-sex couples.

The **medicalization of homosexuality** also persists when some psychoanalytically and behaviorally oriented psychotherapists consider homosexual orientation as a pathological condition and **try to cure it**. It is often forgotten that **homosexual orientation is completely excluded from the latest version of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-10)** (<https://old.uzis.cz/cz/mkn/index.html>). The American Psychological Association and other organizations argue that there is no scientific basis or empirical data to consider homosexuality as a disorder or abnormality of sexual orientation^[2]. This is the recognition of homosexually oriented men and women as a distinct sexual minority, which is neither criminalized nor medicalized in modern democracies. The homosexual minority should have the same rights and responsibilities as the heterosexual majority.

How is sexual orientation formed?

There is much debate about the ways in which **sexual orientation is formed**. In recent decades, experts have preferred biological theories^[3]. Despite almost a century of psychoanalytic and psychological speculation, there is **no real evidence** to support the view that **the nature of parenting or early childhood play any role** in shaping an individual's heterosexual or homosexual orientation. It seems that sexual orientation is essentially biological and predetermined by a complex interplay of genetic factors and early uterine environment. **Sexual orientation is therefore not a choice**^[4]. Speculations about the influence of family or poor psychological development on the formation of sexual orientation are based on misinformation and prejudices^[5].

The presence of a persistent homosexual minority in a predominantly heterosexual world would be difficult to understand without a very significant **biological predisposition**. We know that homosexual orientation appears in adolescents with endogenous urgency. It has never been shown that it is possible to learn a homosexual orientation. There are no scientific studies documenting successful and safe changes in sexual orientation. **Attempts to change sexual orientation are controversial** because of the tension between values espoused

by some religious organizations on one hand and values of organizations supporting the rights of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals and professional and scientific organizations on the other ^[1]. No major professional medical organization supports efforts to change sexual orientation, and practically all of them have adopted statements warning professionals and the public^[6].

Research into the biological basis for homosexuality is supported by studies of homosexuality in monozygotic and dizygotic twins. These studies generally show that homosexual orientation is **statistically significantly more common in monozygotic twins** than in dizygotic twins. Recent genetic studies have been able to define the genome of male homosexuality quite precisely, albeit with numerous question marks.

Homosexual men and women in puberty and a predominantly heterosexual environment are often pushed to "be like everyone else." Therefore, the first sexual experiences of later-defined homosexuals are sometimes heterosexual. About half of homosexual men and two-thirds of homosexual women will have had heterosexual sex at some point. Most of these encounters occur during adolescence and young adulthood.

Coming out

The process of recognizing and accepting one's atypical sexual orientation is often referred to as **"coming out."** It is a process that can be of varying length and conflict. Not only the subject's mental stability and education are important, but also the attitudes of their closest circle and society as a whole. Open sexual education always takes into account that a certain percentage of people are homosexual and that children should be made aware of this fact. They are also taught that a person may react in different ways to their sexual atypicality and that society must accept homosexual individuals without prejudice. However, it is certain that even the most liberal societies have not completely rid themselves of conflicting attitudes towards homosexuality. The majority rarely overlooks the differences of minorities.

Intrapersonal and social problems cause individuals who are homosexually oriented to have a higher incidence of suicidal attempts than heterosexuals. Because they may be ashamed of their sexual orientation, the true state of affairs remains hidden from doctors even in cases of repeated sexually motivated suicidal attempts.

The resistance of society and the conflictual intrapersonal processing of homosexual orientation have resulted in certain specificities in the practical lives of homosexual people.

Homosexual men

"Czech language does not have any unambiguously accepted term for **homosexual men**. However, it seems that the Americanism **gay** is becoming more common in Czech. Homosexual men have a high tendency towards **sexual promiscuity**. There are two explanations for this phenomenon. Firstly, men are biologically predisposed towards higher promiscuity and activity. If two men meet in a homosexual couple, their biological predisposition has understandable consequences. The second explanation is the difficulty of achieving a stable homosexual partnership due to social problems. It is claimed that this element will be eliminated if society manages to raise tolerance towards the homosexual minority. The practice of homosexual men is often characterized by anonymous contacts realized with high motivational urgency in culturally and dignifiedly inappropriate places. In this context, let us recall in particular the well-known **"toilet erotica"** of some homosexuals. Sexual practices of homosexual men are varied. Most of them engage in mutual masturbation, as well as oral-genital contacts and anal intercourse. With a high number of partners and often risky sexual practices, it is not surprising that sexually transmitted diseases spread more among promiscuous homosexual men than among heterosexuals.

The higher incidence of syphilis and gonorrhea among homosexuals has been known for a long time. A similar significance is given to the very frequent positivity of hepatitis B virus and, in recent years, HIV virus and AIDS. The occurrence of anal fissures and periproctal abscesses has rather mechanical than epidemiological consequences.

The male homosexual minority has greater **cohesion** and is therefore more visible in society than the minority of lesbian homosexuals. Some interest groups of homosexuals have the need to present homosexuality as something better, higher, and more noble than heterosexuality. The element of **hypercompensation**, so well known in psychology of minorities burdened with a feeling of certain insufficiency, is evident here.

Male homosexual couples rarely have the opportunity to care for children, although they would surely often be interested in doing so. This makes their cultural and social engagement even greater. For various reasons, there are slightly more of them in certain professions than in the whole society, such as actors, dancers, performers, waiters, but also celibate priests."

Homosexual women

For a **homosexually oriented woman**, the term **"lesbian"** can already be considered generally accepted today. In a lesbian couple, two women come together, making the pair **emotionally warmer**, often overflowing with feelings. The coexistence of two women, who can also raise a child together, does not attract as much attention as male homosexual couples, making it more common. Women are less promiscuous, and a lesbian couple can count on greater stability.

The legalization of **registered partnership** for individuals of the same sex undoubtedly improves the sociosexual adaptation of gays and lesbians, despite the fact that this new institute is not very attractive to many of them.

Homophobia

"Homophobia" is the common denominator of negative judgments about homosexual people. This term refers to all possible (and impossible) "fears of homosexual orientation". In public speeches, in addition to serious considerations, purely emotional arguments also appear. Insults are far more often directed towards homosexual men than towards homosexual women. Despite its name, "homophobia" is not a real phobia, but rather a (often derogatory) term for a critical attitude towards homosexuality, its practice or the demands of homosexual activists.

The basis for "homophobia" is sometimes considered to be fear of the unknown and uncommon. This is not surprising for a characteristic that occurs in only a few percent of the population. However, those who have these concerns about unnatural sexuality can also argue for the obvious pathological nature of the characteristic, which hinders physiological reproductive function.

Support for attitudes considered "homophobic" by some experts in recent years can be found, for example, in the Old Testament - the book of *Leviticus* (18:22-23) evaluates homosexual sexual intercourse and intercourse with animals identically. Both practices are sometimes referred to as *sodomy*.



Same-sex parents

Links

Related articles

- Paraphilia
- Sexual delinquency
- Homosexuality and evolution
- Homosexuality among women

External links

- Homosexuality (czech wikipedia)
- Homosexuality (english wikipedia)

Bibliography

Author: **doc. MUDr. Jaroslav Zvěřina, CSc.** (Head of Department of Sexology of 1st Faculty of Medicine and General University Hospital in Prague (VFN) (<http://sex.lf1.cuni.cz/>))

1. American Psychological Association. *Resolution on Appropriate Affirmative Responses to Sexual Orientation Distress and Change Efforts* [online]. ©2009. [cit. 22.4.2010]. <<http://www.apa.org/about/governance/council/policy/sexual-orientation.aspx>>.
2. American Psychological Association, California Psychological Association, American Psychiatric Association, National Association of Social Workers. *Case No. S147999 in the Supreme Court of the State of California, In re Marriage Cases Judicial Council Coordination Proceeding No. 4365(...)* [online]. ©2007. [cit. 23.4.2010]. <<http://www.courts.ca.gov>>.
3. American Academy of Pediatrics. *Sexual Orientation and Adolescents* [online]. ©2004. [cit. 23.4.2010]. <<http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;113/6/1827>>.
4. Royal College of Psychiatrists. *Submission to the Church of England's Listening Exercise on Human Sexuality*. [online]. ©2007. [cit. 23.4.2010]. <[https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pdf/Submission to the Church of England.pdf](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pdf/Submission%20to%20the%20Church%20of%20England.pdf)>.
5. American Psychiatric Association. *Sexual Orientation* [online]. ©2010. [cit. 23.4.2010]. <<http://www.healthyminds.org/More-Info-For/GayLesbianBisexuals.aspx>>.
6. GLAD. *Expert affidavit of Gregory M. Herek, Ph.D.* [online]. ©2009. [cit. 22.4.2010]. <<https://www.glad.org/uploads/docs/cases/gill-v-office-of-personnel-management/2009-11-17-doma-aff-herék.pdf>>.



Expression of homophobia