CONDUCTING A BEHAVIORAL RISK ASSESSMENT I

Patricia Coury-Doniger, FNPC

06/29/2016
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[Video Transcript]

00:00:08
- [NP] What we're going to do now is to show a demonstration of doing a behavioral risk assessment without the complete sexual history that you saw in the first demonstration. So this will be a behavioral risk assessment that consists of the nature of the current sexual relationships, the number of partner for the patient and her partner or partners, and then again, history and attitudes towards substance use including alcohol use, HIV testing, and condom use.

00:00:36
- [NP] So Tess, I know you're here because you think you have a yeast infection.
- [Tess] Yeah.
- [NP] And we have a specimen in the lab looking to see whether there's yeast there or not. And if so, we'll give you some treatment today.
- [Tess] Okay.
- [NP] Okay, but while you're waiting, why don't we talk a little bit about your partner situation.
- [NP] Can you tell me your partner situation right now in terms of sexual partners?
- [Tess] Well, sure. I actually just met a new guy four months ago.
- [NP] Okay.
- [Tess] And things are going great.
- [NP] So you've been with this one guy for four months?
- [NP] Okay. And you say "going great." What's that relationship like for you?
- [Tess] Oh, he's wonderful. We are, have decided to be mutually exclusive. And he's just a really great guy.
- [NP] Okay.
- [Tess] We're having a lot of fun together.
- [Tess] Yeah.
- [NP] And when's the last time that you had sexual contact with him?
- [Tess] Oh, probably three days ago.
- [NP] Okay, good. And how about with somebody other than him?
- [Tess] Oh, probably six months ago.
- [NP] Okay, okay. And so just this one partner in the last three months.
- [Tess] Yeah.
- [NP] And how about for him? What's his situation?
- [Tess] I dunno. I mean, I don't know.
- [NP] Okay. So you said you've decided to be mutually monogamous.
- [Tess] Yeah.
- [NP] What does that mean for you?
- [NP] What do you think that means?
- [Tess] That means that I am just with him. Yeah.
- [NP] I got you. Okay. So, in terms of thinking about other things relative to what's going on with the two of you, tell me what's happening in terms of any alcohol or drug use.
- [Tess] Well, I drink alcohol on weekends, when I'm not working.
- [NP] Right. How about for him?
- [Tess] Oh, he drinks alcohol.
- [NP] Okay. And how about other drugs?
- [Tess] I'm really not sure.
- [NP] How about for you?
- [Tess] Oh, none.
- [NP] Okay. Okay. Not sure for him?
- [Tess] I don't think he does.
- [NP] Is it something you've talked about ever with him?
- [Tess] Yeah, we just don't normally. I mean, I don't do drugs. He's never done them in front of me, so... I just assume that he doesn't do them.
- [NP] And how about in terms of getting an HIV test for yourself? Have you ever had that done?
[Tess] Gosh. I don't remember the last time.

[NP] But you've maybe had that, we think or no?

[Tess] Would I have gotten one at my doctor?

[NP] Not unless they talked to you about it.

[Tess] Oh, yeah.

[NP] So maybe never?


[NP] Okay. And how about for him? Is that something you've ever talked with him about? His HIV?

[Tess] Actually we haven't.

[NP] Okay.

[Tess] No.

[NP] So don't know his HIV situation? Okay. And then how about your experience with using condoms?

[Tess] Oh, well we don't, because I'm only with him, so.

[NP] Okay, okay. Have you used condoms in the past with other partners?

[Tess] I did with the partner before him. The guy I dated last year.

[NP] Okay.

[Tess] So I have used them, yeah.

[NP] Have used them.

[NP] Okay, you've been able to use them successfully, like you know how to use them?

[Tess] Yeah, most of the time, yeah.

[NP] But with this current partner, what's your thinking about condoms with him?

[Tess] Well, because we're, we are just seeing each other, so... We don't need to use condoms.

[NP] Okay. Okay. So, I'm a little bit, because I'm just sort of wondering- to clarify, sometimes you're saying you're just with him and you both agree to it. But then sometimes you said you're not sure about him in terms of others. So what's your thinking about that?

[Tess] Well, I know he spends... He has a couple kids and I know that he spends the night over at the kids' mom's house with the kids.

[NP] Oh, okay.

[Tess] And he says nothing's going on, but...
- [NP] Not sure.
- [Tess] Yeah.
- [NP] Do you know anything about the mother?
- [Tess] No. No.
- [NP] Okay. So you're just kind of wondering. How often does that happen that he's over there at night?
- [Tess] On the weekends that he gets the kids.
- [NP] Ah. How often...?
- [Tess] So, every other weekend?
- [NP] Okay, okay, so he's over there during the night for the weekends.
- [Tess] Yeah.
- [NP] Every other weekend.
- [Tess] Yeah.
- [NP] All right. And so it sounds like you haven't talked a lot about those specifics with him in terms of whether he's got other partners, except this situation where he says he's staying with his kids.
- [Tess] Yeah.
- [NP] Okay. And about his HIV situation or whatever.
- [Tess] Yeah, no.
- [NP] Okay. All right. Well, let me see if I understand what you've told me is your situation right now. You're monogamous with this one guy for four months. And you're happy in this relationship.
- [Tess] Yeah.
- [NP] And you're just seeing him. And you're not using any drugs, but do have some alcohol use, recreationally, right?
- [Tess] Mm hm.
- [NP] And then for him, you think, you're not sure about other drug use or his HIV status?
- [Tess] Yeah.
- [NP] Okay. Okay. And you're not using condoms with him right now because you feel like you're just with him.
- [Tess] Right.
- [NP] Okay. And even though you have some concerns, maybe, about what he's doing, there's nothing specific that you're worried about.


00:06:26

- [NP] So in this behavioral risk assessment scenario, we learned that Tess was in a relationship with one male partner for the previous four months. And she's kind of a little ambivalent in asking her about whether her current partner has other partners. She sometimes thinks he doesn't, but then sometimes wonders if he does, because he is involved with his children and the mother of his children, and does sometimes stay at her home. In terms of substance use, she's using alcohol recreationally. She thinks that he uses alcohol, too, recreationally, but is not sure about other drugs. She's never had an HIV test, and he's never had an HIV test. So in terms of her attitude towards condom use, she's not using them with him, and she sees no need to use a condom, because she's just with him. This would be a stage we call pre-contemplative, where a patient is not even ambivalent about whether they're using condoms or not, but in fact see no need to use a condom. That would be pre-contemplative stage for condom use with her one regular partner.

00:07:29

- [NP] So Tess, I wanted to talk to you just a little bit more about what we talk to everybody about, about prevention from getting HIV or other STDs.

- [Tess] Okay.

- [NP] And I know you just talked to me about your partner situation. Sometimes I think it's helpful if we sort of sketch out what is that situation.

- [Tess] Okay.

- [NP] So you told me, obviously you're here. We designate that by the symbol for the female. And then you have one male partner for that four-month period, right? That you talked to me about.

- [Tess] Right.

- [NP] And you don't have other partners.

- [Tess] No.

- [NP] But you do know that he is involved in a relationship with the babies' mother. And that sometimes he stays over there. What do you think her situation is, in terms of having other sexual partners?

- [Tess] Well, he does... I hear rumors. So... I mean, I think the reason they got divorced was because she was messing around on him. So...

- [NP] So, high likelihood?
- [Tess] Yeah. So that's why I don't even want to trust that... I don't even think that he would sleep with her when he goes there.

- [NP] But you're not sure.

- [Tess] I'm not.

- [NP] Okay. All right. So let's just say maybe she's got a couple of other partners, like in the last three months or something. Like, during the time that you've been with him, like four months.

- [Tess] Okay.

- [NP] Okay. And just say that there's some question here, although you're not really thinking that he's definitely sleeping with the babies' mother. But you have a little bit of question because he stays there. Okay?

- [Tess] Okay.

- [NP] You said also that you really don't see a need to use condoms, even though you have used them before, because really you're just with him at this point. And maybe at other times you had other partners, or not really just in a monogamous situation.

- [Tess] Right.

- [NP] Okay. And mutual monogamy- being with someone who's just with you- if both people are negative, know that they're negative for HIV is a strategy for safety, right?

- [Tess] Yeah.

- [NP] So that is a good strategy. But mutual monogamy does require to be safe, that the other person is not having other partners. So I just want you to think about that scenario in terms of what you're involved in. And, you said he's never been HIV tested, right?

- [Tess] Not that I know of.

- [NP] Okay, and so, we don't know if she has or not, right?

- [Tess] Right.

- [NP] In terms of whether she's been HIV tested. But, you know, she does have other partners.

- [Tess] Yeah.

- [NP] So just tell me, hypothetically, what if it's possible that she might have HIV?

- [Tess] Does that mean that I can get it?

- [NP] Well, that would be a scenario if he were involved with her or had been involved with her. Because you said that he hasn't been tested, right?

- [Tess] Yeah.
- [NP] So I'm just saying, it is sexually transmitted. So in the scenario that maybe he's not seeing her now, and he's over there just hanging out with his kids. But he was seeing her at some point, obviously, right? In terms of a sexual relationship. So, without knowing, what do you think of the possibility of this?

- [Tess] It means I'd better go have a conversation with him.

- [NP] Like, if that were the case, how would that impact on you, do you think?

- [Tess] I mean, I could get it.

- [NP] You know, Tess, monogamy is a way that women often get HIV, because they are in fact only with one other partner, like you, and they see monogamy as safe. But sometimes, monogamy is how people get HIV, because they are monogamous but their partner is infected and they just don't know. And sometimes the partner doesn't know, right?

- [Tess] Yeah.

- [NP] HIV can be around for over ten years without any symptoms, without any kind of medical problem.

- [Tess] Wow. When you draw it out like that, it looks a lot different.

- [NP] Sure. Well, in your mind, you see him. That's the one you're involved in, right?

- [Tess] Yeah.

- [NP] Yeah.

- [NP] So you said you think you might have a conversation?

- [Tess] I know I will.

- [NP] How do you think that will go for you?

- [Tess] Well, if he likes me enough to continue dating me, we'll go get tested together.

- [NP] Yeah. And the strategy is also, that we in New York state have a law that is recommending that everybody over age 13, basically, get a test for HIV to know their status. So sometimes, instead of bringing it up anything around his situation with her, is to say, "I went to my OBGYN, and I had an HIV test today, and they said everybody should be tested." And here's information you could give to him, and say, "How about for you, too? How about we both get tested or something? Both know each other's status."

- [Tess] That's a good idea. Then I'm not bringing up any question about what he might be doing.

- [NP] Right, yeah. Some people find it would be less threatening.

- [Tess] Yeah.

- [NP] Because it is literally recommended for every adult.

- [Tess] Oh, okay.
- [Tess] That's a great idea.

- [NP] And what do you think about any protection in between? Is that something you want to think a little bit through?

- [Tess] I think that maybe we should start using condoms until we know.

- [NP] How do you think that will go?

- [Tess] I'll have to think about how I'm going to approach that one.

- [NP] Yeah.

- [NP] Sometimes, it could be approached in terms of using a female condom. Do you know about female condoms?

- [Tess] I've heard about it.

- [NP] Well, it's something that the woman puts in the vagina before sex.

- [Tess] Okay.

- [NP] You could put it in several hours, a couple of hours before. And the man doesn't have to be involved in the decision about that. Women use it for birth control. But it's something that could be a short term measure while you're figuring out his testing, and maybe what's happening with the babies' mother.

- [Tess] Okay.

- [NP] That sound okay?

- [Tess] Yeah. Thank you.

- [NP] Great. We'll talk about it more when you come back for your test results.

- [Tess] All right. Thank you.

00:14:15

- [NP] What you just saw demonstrated was a behavioral counseling strategy that matched Tess's stage of readiness for change. So when we did her behavioral risk assessment, she was pre-contemplative for condom use, because she saw herself as monogamous and was not really exploring too much whether her current partner, whom she's been with for four months, is involved with his baby's mother or not. So we need to use a strategy that matched her pre-contemplative stage. She saw no need to use a condom because she's monogamous. So we used a stick figure type of a strategy, which is to explore the relationship set as showing the whole picture to the client. And so we drew out a little scenario with her and her current partner, and then the mother of his children, and then her scenario, which the patient perceived was that she does have other sexual partners: the baby's mother. So then we introduced the concept of possible HIV in that scenario because the patient did not know her partner's status, and obviously not his baby's mother's status. So with her sort of seeing it differently, because she saw if he
had HIV previously from having been involved with the baby's mother, he could have that unknowingly, and she saw that as putting her at risk potentially. So she is willing to explore getting tested with him, and possibly using a female condom as a first step while she’s exploring- working with him to get his HIV test as well as hers.

[Video End]