

Ob-gyns can help ID sex workers, improve access to care

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(HealthDay)—Obstetrician-gynecologists can help improve recognition

of sex workers and increase their access to preventive care, according to a Committee Opinion published in the July issue of *Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

Researchers from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' Committee on Health Care for Underserved Women discuss ways in which obstetrician-gynecologists can help improve the recognition of sex workers and increase their access to preventive care.

The authors note that while taking a sexual history, obstetrician-gynecologists should ask about the exchange of sex for money, goods, or services. The risks of [sexually transmitted infections](#), sexual or physical violence, incarceration, and reproductive coercion may be increased for women engaged in sex work. Women who engage in sex work should receive all appropriate American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists-recommended cancer screenings and vaccinations. The special needs of this population for preexposure and postexposure prophylaxis for HIV should be considered. Sex workers should be counseled about the health risks associated with sex work and the benefit of more frequent visits. Obstetrician-gynecologists should try to contribute to efforts to increase access to preventive and therapeutic [health care](#) for these women; they should also advocate for more research into the prevalence of sex work and the specific health care needs of this population.

"The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists supports increasing awareness about the health risks, preventive care needs, and limited health care services for female [sex workers](#)," the authors write.

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