



# Factors Impacting Lesbian Health and Wellbeing: A Systematic Review

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## Summary of Problem/Issue

This research examines established factors impacting lesbians' disproportionately lower health quality as compared to the general population. Worldwide within the last decade, research highlights successes, barriers, and concerns for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) population. However, the need for separating these groups by specific LGBT populations remains untouched.

## Methods

### Design:

- Exhaustive Review of the literature since 2000.
- Multiple databases accessed and evaluated
  - Academic Search Premier, BioMed Central, MEDLINE via PubMed, PsycARTICLES, PubMed, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink Taylor & Francis Online, and Wiley Online Library

### Procedures

- Literature review consisted of articles published in the United States since 2000 assessing the term lesbian using the following search terms:
- “parenting” OR “marriage” OR “same sex relationships” OR “children” OR “LGBT” OR “lesbian mothers” OR “pregnancy” OR “social support” OR “alcohol” OR “drugs” OR “violence” OR “abuse” OR “community” OR “health disparities” OR “health behavior” OR “socioeconomic status”.



December 2016 photo credit:  
Rhiannon Lewis



Are you a woman? Do you self-identify as LGB?

We would like to talk to you about the perception of well-being among lesbians

Research is being conducted at USCB to better understand well-being among the lesbian community

Please contact Dr. Diana Reindl at [driendl@uscb.edu](mailto:driendl@uscb.edu)

Sign-Up Here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LowCountryLGB>

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## Results

Twenty-five studies met the inclusion criteria and revealed the following:

- the literature shows a high correlation of negative experiences when disclosing being LGB that affects physical and mental health.
- Other large quantitative surveys suggest lesbians have disproportionately higher rates of binge drinking, smoking, obesity, and violence (Institute of Medicine, 2011).
- Research suggests lesbians have lower self-perceived happiness and desire to marry when compared to heterosexuals (Pew Research Center, 2010 & 2013).

## Conclusion

Currently, no qualitative research shows psychosocial and environmental experiences contributing to disparities among self-identifying lesbians. Research focuses on quantitative measures but provides little context from lesbians themselves, leaving the correlations uncertain. Therefore, the imperative “so what?” or reasons for these findings are not clear and further research is needed to identify possible relevant explanations.

