

## Sexual health and sexually transmitted infections in northern frontier populations

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**Contact:**

**Dr Dionne Gesink Law**

University of Toronto  
Dalla Lana School of Public Health  
155 College St, 6th Floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5T 3M7 CANADA

**Tel:** 416 978 5869

**Fax:** 416 978 8299

**Email:** [dionne.gesinklaw@utoronto.ca](mailto:dionne.gesinklaw@utoronto.ca)

**Update:**

Rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are disparately high among indigenous populations of the Arctic (Gesink-Law et al, 2008). Research in Canada, the U.S., and Greenland (Eol #1147) aimed at building capacity to examine individual, social and environmental factors that influence perceptions of sexual health and sexually transmitted infections is being conducted by researchers and communities using participatory methods (Gesink et al, 2010; Rink et al, 2009). The aims include a description of the basic epidemiology of sexual health and STIs and to identify communities at risk and targets for capacity building and interventions. Preliminary results indicate that *Mycoplasma genitalium* is as prevalent as *Chlamydia trachomatis* in Greenland and that social and cultural norms around sexual health communication, trust, drinking and sex appear to influence individual sexual behaviors' and risk for STIs. Based on this research, the National Science Foundation has granted US, Canadian, Greenlandic and Danish researchers new funds to explore community based participatory methods in Greenland and develop a social intervention focusing on sexual health communication with families and relationships.

Gesink, D., E. Rink, R. Montgomery-Anderson, G. Mulvad and A. Koch, 2010. Developing a culturally competent and socially relevant sexual health survey with an urban Arctic community. *Int. J. Circumpolar Health*, 69(1): 25-37.

Gesink-Law, D., E. Rink, G. Mulvad and A. Koch, 2008. Sexual health and sexually transmitted infections in the North American Arctic. *Emerg. Infect. Diseases*, 14(1): 4-9.

Rink, E., D. Gesink-Law, R. Montgomery-Andersen, G. Mulvad and A. Koch, 2009. The practical application of community based participatory research in Greenland: Initial experiences of the Greenland sexual health study. *Int. J. Circumpolar Health*, 68(4): 405-413.