Box 1: GOALS Framework for the Sexual History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Suggested Script</th>
<th>Rationale and Goal Accomplished</th>
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| Give a preamble that emphasizes sexual health. | I’d like to talk with you for a couple of minutes about your **sexuality and sexual health**. I talk to all of my patients about sexual health, because it’s such an **important part of overall health**. Some of my patients have questions or concerns about their sexual health, so I want to make sure I understand what your questions or concerns might be and provide whatever information or other help you might need. | • Focuses on sexual health, not risk.  
• Normalizes sexuality as part of health and healthcare.  
• Opens the door for the patient’s questions.  
• Clearly states a desire to understand and help. |
| Offer opt-out HIV/STI testing and information. | First, I like to test all my patients for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Do you have any concerns about that? | • Doesn’t commit to specific tests, but does normalize testing.  
• Sets up the idea that you will recommend some testing regardless of what the patient tells you.  
• Opens the door for the patient to talk about HIV or STIs as a concern. |
| Ask an open-ended question. | Pick one (or use an open-ended question that you prefer):  
• *Tell me about your sex life.*  
• *What would you say are your biggest sexual health questions or concerns?*  
• *How is your current sex life similar or different from what you think of as your ideal sex life?* | • Puts the focus on the patient.  
• Lets you hear what the patient thinks is most important first.  
• Lets you hear the language the patient uses to talk about their body, partners, and sex. |
| Listen for relevant information and probe to fill in the blanks. | → *Besides [partner(s) already disclosed], tell me about any other sexual partners.*  
→ *How do you protect yourself against HIV and STIs?*  
→ *How do you prevent pregnancy (unless you are trying to have a child)?*  
→ *What would help you take (even) better care of your sexual health?* | • Makes no assumption about monogamy or about gender of partners.  
• Avoids setting up a script for over-reporting condom use.  
• Can be asked of patients regardless of gender.  
• Increases motivation by asking the patient to identify strategies/interventions. |
| Suggest a course of action. | → *So, as I said before, I’d like to test you for [describe tests indicated by sexual history conversation].*  
→ *I’d also like to give you information about PrEP/contraception/other referrals. I think it might be able to help you [focus on benefit].* | • Allows you to tailor STI testing to the patient so they don’t feel targeted.  
• Shows that you keep your word.  
• Allows you to couch education or referral in terms of relevant benefits, tailored to the specific patient. |