

RAP* Time



RURAL CENTER *for* AIDS/STD PREVENTION

A JOINT PROJECT OF
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*Rural AIDS/STD prevention. rap (rap) v. Slang. To talk freely and openly.

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Teen Clinic Patients With Older Steady Sex Partner More Likely to Have History of STDs

About one-quarter of new STD cases reportedly annually occur among 15-19 year olds. Females aged 15-19 have the highest rates of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis compared with women of other age groups. Same-age males have the second highest rates of chlamydia and gonorrhea among men.

Risk factors associated with the acquisition of STDs, such as multiple sexual partners and inconsistent use of barrier-method contraceptives, are prevalent among adolescents.

This study examined the influence of sociodemographic characteristics, STD/HIV knowledge, and psychological and behavioral risk factors on sexual risk taking and STDs among adolescents.

Methodology

The sample was 303 sexually experienced, racially diverse adolescents who were seeking health care at a general HMO teen clinic.

Outcomes of the Study

The mean age was 16.7 with 57.9% being female. About 40% were African-American, about

15% white or Latino, with about 29% other race/ethnicity. Types of sexual behavior included vaginal sex (98.7%), anal sex (13.3%), and oral sex (55.7%). About four out of ten (43.8%) had four or more lifetime sexual partners, 62.8% did not consistently use condoms, 21.1% had a history of pregnancy or inpregnation, and 28.2% had a history of STDs.

Major findings include:

- A self-reported history of STDs was significantly associated with having an older sexual partner, being female, being African-American, having a history of STDs, an increased number of sexual partners, and frequent use of marijuana. The researchers assert that African-American teens' increased STD risk may be partially explained by higher prevalence of STD among their sexual partners who are older and at higher risk, and who may be members of geographic core groups with high prevalence of STDs.
- Perceptions that friends engage in risk behaviors, having no intention of using condoms in the future, knowing someone of a similar age who has had an

STD, perceptions of personal STD risk, and perceptions that friends will not support their STD risk reduction efforts were significantly associated with sexual risk behavior.

- Teens who believed that sexual exclusivity would not reduce their risk were more likely to report a history of STDs.

Implications for Prevention

The study suggests that sexually experienced teens who are female, African-American, report frequent use of marijuana, have older sex partners, and report a history of pregnancy and multiple sex partners should be screened for STDs and be targeted for prevention education. Further, interventions should address the role of adolescents' perceptions of their social network and their intention to engage in future risk behaviors.

SOURCE: Boyer, C. B., et al. (2000). Associations of sociodemographic, psychosocial, and behavior factors with sexual risk and sexually transmitted diseases in teen clinic patients. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 27*, 102-111.

Majority of Women Reported They Would Use Microbicide

The testing and evaluation of topical microbicides to prevent STDs, including HIV infection, has increased in recent years. This focus reflects the need for a female-controlled method to protect those who are unwilling or unable to discuss condoms with their partner.

While the efficacy of microbicides are being tested, their acceptability to the user has received little attention. A Phase I trial of a microbicidal gel included an assessment of the product's acceptability among 27 low-risk participants.

Participants reported only minor side effects of product use. Some women reported discharge and messiness are drawbacks; however, they considered these nuisances being outweighed by the potential value of the product. The majority reported that they would use the product if it were proven efficacious, and if they perceived that they were at risk for STD infection.

SOURCE: Bentley, M. E., et al. (2000). Acceptability of a novel vaginal microbicide during a safety trial among low-risk women. *Family Planning Perspectives*, 32, 184-188.

Condom Use Among U.S. High School Students Has Increased

Many adolescents participate in sexual risk behavior that places them at risk for HIV/STD and unwanted pregnancy. Data from the national school-based Youth Risk Behavior Survey from 1991, 1993, 1995, and 1997 were analyzed. The YRBS is a self-administered, anonymous survey which uses a national probability sample of U.S. students in public and private schools, grades 9 - 12.

From 1991 to 1997, condom use significantly increased (from 46% to 57%), birth control pill use decreased (from 21% to 17%), and use of withdrawal significantly decreased (from 18% to 13%). In 1997, female condom use was significantly lower in the 9th grade than in the 12th grade. Among males, condom use remained stable from 9th to 12th grade.

Inadequate contraceptive use among sexually active teens continues to be a major public health problem in the United States.

SOURCE: Everett, S. A., et al. (2000). Use of birth control pills, condoms, and withdrawal among U.S. high school students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 27, 112-118.

Percentage of Adults Ever Tested for HIV Rose to 40%

From 1987 to 1995, the percentage of adults ever tested for HIV increased from 16% to 40%. The data from three national surveys were consistent with one another, and all showed much higher rates of testing for persons at increased risk for HIV.

SOURCE: Anderson, J. E., et al. (2000). HIV testing among the general US population and persons at increased risk: Information from national surveys, 1987-1996. *American Journal of Public Health*, 90, 1089-1095.

Fewer Condom Discussions For Latinas

This study determined if abuse and partner hypermasculinity altered sexual behavior change among 46 Latinas. Women with higher masculinity partners reported less discussion regarding condoms. Sexual behavior change was not related to abuse or partner hypermasculinity.

SOURCE: Suarez-Al-Adam, M., et al. (2000). Influence of aduse and partner hypermasculinity on the sexual behavior of Latinas. *AIDS Education and Prevention* 12, 263-274.



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