

RAP* Time



RURAL CENTER *for* AIDS/STD PREVENTION

A JOINT PROJECT OF
INDIANA UNIVERSITY, PURDUE UNIVERSITY,
and UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

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

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Hispanic women farm workers at greater risk for HIV than male farm workers

In the U.S., seasonal and migrant farm workers are an understudied population. Their marginalized status and life circumstances increase their risk for HIV/STI infection. Low rates of condom use, high prevalence of STIs, and frequent use of prostitutes also contribute to risk among this group. Even though Hispanic migrant and seasonal farm workers (MSFW) are the largest proportion of farmworkers, relatively few studies have exclusively focused on Hispanic MSFW.

This study examined the factors associated with behaviors that increase the risk of sexually acquiring HIV infection among a sample Hispanic MSFW in an area having one of the highest HIV rates in the U.S.

Methodology

A community sample was recruited in southern Miami-Dade County, Florida. The area is important because it has a stable population of MSFW as well as a transitory group of migrants who work in the field seasonally.

Bilingual staff interviewed adults 18 years or older anonymously at camps, worksites and other public venues. Variables assessed were

HIV knowledge, HIV testing, HIV risk perception, perceived partner risk, drug use, sexual behaviors, health care utilization, and history of STI.

Outcomes of the Study

121 male and 123 female Hispanic MSFW participated. The mean age was 28. 70% were not married, and 63% earned \$0-\$200 per week. 82% were born outside the U.S. Average length in the U.S. was 5 years. 91% did not have health insurance. 16% reported ever having an STI.

Major findings include:

- 55% were at risk for acquiring HIV (proportion not having condom protected vaginal or anal intercourse during past three months).
- Women were 4 times more likely to be at risk of sexually acquiring HIV than men.
- 34% reported having 2 or more partners for the past two months.
- 66% reported not using condoms in the past twelve months.
- 15% of women had been paid for sex. 33% of men had paid for sex and 5% had been paid for sex.
- 21% had ever been tested for HIV.
- 22% had never heard of HIV.

- 70% reported having some or a lot of knowledge regarding HIV transmission.
- 27% worried about getting HIV some or a lot, and 73% worried not at all or a little.
- 66% perceived no partner risk for HIV.
- Variables positively associated with being at risk of sexually acquiring HIV: being female, being married, having some or a lot of knowledge about HIV transmission, having ever used marijuana, two or more sex partners in past two months, and having had an STI.

Implications for Prevention

Overall, women were at greater risk for HIV infection. This study heightens the importance of recognizing elevated risk for HIV among Hispanic women MSFW. Information from this study can help guide the content of HIV prevention programming for this population.

SOURCE: Fernandez, I., et al. Predictors of HIV risk among Hispanic farm workers in South Florida: Women are at higher risk than men. *AIDS and Behavior*, 8, 165-174.

Unknown partner HIV status among MSM risk factor for HIV

Recent studies have implied a need to integrate questions about sexual partners into clinical risk assessment. This study determined how often MSM (N=2,032) visiting a Seattle, WA STD clinic used condoms in the past 12 months for anal sex with partners who were HIV-positive, HIV-negative and unknown HIV status.

MSM displayed a pattern of mixing by HIV status, particularly for unprotected anal intercourse (UAI). 27% of men who denied knowing they were HIV positive, and 43% of HIV-positive MSM reported engaging in UAI with a partner of opposite or unknown HIV status. Of the HIV-positive MSM, 43% were identified as potential HIV transmitters; of those, 47% reported UAI with partners of unknown HIV status. 22% of these MSM reported UAI with a HIV-negative partner.

Integrating questions about anal sex partner HIV status and condom use identifies MSM at greatest potential risk for HIV infection.

SOURCE: Golden, M. R., et al. (2004). Importance of sex partner HIV status in HIV risk assessment among men who have sex with men. *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes*, 36, 734-742.

Many teens diagnosed with STI in ER not treated properly

Many adolescents with STI symptoms seek care in hospital emergency rooms. This study assessed the management of STI in emergency rooms (ER) in the U.S.

18,999 records representing 70,693,603 adolescent visits to U.S. ERs were identified for the 1992-1998 period. 91% of patients were female. Overall, 80% of patients diagnosed with STI received treatment. 91% of female patients had pelvic inflammatory disease and 71% had other STIs.

Males were more likely to be treated for STI. Hispanics were less likely to be treated. Treatment for patients with PID was compliant with CDC guidelines in 35% of cases. For all patients with STI, 0.3% had an HIV test, and for female patients 43% had a pregnancy test. Age, insurance type, and hospital location were not related to receiving antibiotics.

This study found less than optimal STI care for adolescents utilizing ERs. Further study is needed to explain the reasons for this lack of STI adequate care.

SOURCE: Beckmann, K. R., et al. (2004). Emergency department management of sexually transmitted infections in US adolescents: Results from the National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey. *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, 43, 333-338.

Disparities in chlamydia and GC rates found in youth

Analysis of Add Health data of 14,322 young adults found substantial racial/ethnic disparities in the prevalence of chlamydial and gonococcal infections. Women, black women, black men, and persons from the South had the highest prevalence of chlamydia. Prevalence of gonorrhea was disproportionately higher among black men and women. Overall, chlamydia and gonorrhea prevalence among young adults of this sample was high.

SOURCE: Miller, W. C. (2004). Prevalence of chlamydial and gonococcal infections among young adults in the United States. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 291, 2229-22236.

Syphilis identified in correction facilities

From 1999 to 2002, 63,293 cases of early syphilis were reported to CDC; 12.5% of national cases (13% men, 12% women) were from correctional facilities. Correctional facilities can assist in early identification of syphilis.

SOURCE: Kahn, R. H., et al. (2004). Early syphilis in the United States identified in correction facilities, 1999-2002. *Sexually transmitted diseases*, 31, 360-364.

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The opinions expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the cooperating universities.

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