

# R A P\* Time



## RURAL CENTER *for* AIDS/STD PREVENTION

A JOINT PROJECT OF  
INDIANA UNIVERSITY, UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO,  
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\*Rural AIDS/STD prevention. rap (rap) v. *Slang*. To talk freely and openly. Vol. 11, No. 11, November 2, 2007

## Recent gender-base violence among HIV-positive women found related to sexual risk

Physical and sexual victimization of women continues to impact many women in the United States. Gender-based violence (GBV) is particularly a serious problem among vulnerable populations such as minority women and women from low-income and low-education groups. Research has found associations between GBV and sexual risk behaviors and negative health outcomes.

This study assessed the prevalence of recent gender-based violence (rGBV) among HIV-positive women to determine the association between rGBV and pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and selected sexual and risk-reduction behaviors.

### Methodology

304 HIV+ women were recruited from HIV clinics in the southeastern U.S. (Georgia and Alabama) who reported being sexually active in the prior 6 months with 1 partner. Also assessed were GBV during the previous 3 months, condom use, and negotiation of sexual behaviors. Biological samples for pregnancy and STI testing were collected.

Participants completed face-to-face interviews by trained female

interviewers between September 1997 and December 2000.

Data analysis included comparisons of variables for women with rGBV versus women without rGBV.

### Outcomes of the Study

Mean age was 34 years and 35 years, respectively, for women with rGBV and women without rGBV.

About 8 of 10 women of both groups were African American.

Major findings include:

- 31 (10.2%) reported rGBV by the primary sexual partner in the past 3 months. Of these, 9.9% reported physical abuse and 1.3% reported sexual abuse.
- 15.8% tested positive for an STI.
- Women with a history of rGBV were more likely to report inconsistent condom use in the past 30 days and 6 months and no condom use during last coitus than women without rGBV.
- Women with a history of rGBV were more likely to report never having used condoms in the past 30 days.
- Women with a history of rGBV were more likely to report more unprotected sexual encounters in the past 30 days
- No significant differences were found between the two groups

and negotiation of safer sexual behaviors.

- rGBV was related to threats of abuse and actual abuse resulting from condom use requests.
- A women experiencing rGBV was 5 times more likely to be pregnant.
- A history of abuse was not significantly related to STI diagnosis.

### Implications for Prevention

This study found strong associations between having an abusive primary sexual partner and inconsistent condom use, never using a condom, and a greater number and proportion of unprotected sexual episodes.

The prevalence of rGBV among these HIV-positive women highlights the need for screening for abuse and tailoring interventions to address this issue.

### SOURCE:

Lang, D. L., et al. (2007). Associations between recent gender-based violence and pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, condom use practices, and negotiation of sexual practices among HIV-positive women. *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes*, 46, 216-221.

### Many sexual behaviors may not be considered risky

Sex among couples impact relationship quality and may relate to sexual/reproductive health. This study examined how sexual behaviors in a heterosexual, long term relationships relate to love.

Participants were 6,421 young persons (18-26 years) of Wave 3 of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health who were in a sexual relationship with a person of the other sex for at least three month's duration.

80% engaged in cunnilingus and fellatio as well as intercourse (99%) with 22% having anal sex. Compared with peer couples reporting they did not love each other a lot, both males and females reporting mutually loving relationships had significantly greater odds of having given and received oral sex. Males in loving relationships had greater odds of having had anal sex.

Many of the sexual behaviors occurring in long term, loving relationships may not be considered risky by the couple.

SOURCE: Kaestle, C. et al. (2007). What's love go to do with it? Sexual behaviors of opposite-sex couples through emerging adulthood. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 39, 134-140.

### Chlamydia was found common in young men and women

This study analyzed chlamydia and gonorrhea prevalence in the United States using sexual history and urine specimens collected in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1999-2002.

Prevalence of chlamydia infection was 2.2% and similar for males and females. Among females, the highest prevalence was those aged 14 to 19 years; in males it highest among 14-29 years old. Prevalence was higher among non-Hispanic black persons (6.4%) than non-Hispanic white persons (1.5%). Among females with a history of chlamydia or gonorrhea in prior 12 months, chlamydia prevalence was 16.7%.

Prevalence of gonorrhea was 0.24%, being higher among non-Hispanic black persons (1.2%) than non-Hispanic white persons (0.07%). Among those with gonorrheal infection, 46% also had chlamydia infection.

Findings estimate 2.3 million persons (2.2% prevalence) and 250,000 persons (0.24% prevalence) in the U.S. are infected with chlamydia and gonorrhea, respectively.

SOURCE: Datta, S., D. et al. (2007). Gonorrhea and chlamydia in the United States among persons 14 to 39 years of age, 1999 to 2002. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 147, 89-96.

### HIV most often transmitted during moderate load level

Examining HIV-positive persons, researchers found that those with moderate HIV levels are most likely to transmit HIV to others. Persons with high viral load level are most likely to pass HIV, but have limited time to transmit it. Researchers note that focusing HIV prevention efforts only to those with the highest viral load many not be the most effective strategy.

SOURCE: Fraser, C., et al. (2007). Variation in HIV-1 set-point viral load: Epidemiological analysis and an evolutionary hypothesis. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, doi: 10.1073/pnas.0708559104.

### 100-200 infants infected with HIV yearly

Perinatal HIV transmission is the most common route of HIV infection in children: about 100-200 infants annually. Many of these infections involved women who were not tested early enough in pregnancy of who did not receive prevention services.

SOURCE: CDC. (2007). Mother-to-child (perinatal) HIV transmission and prevention.. [www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/perinatal/resources/factsheets/perinatal.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/perinatal/resources/factsheets/perinatal.htm).

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

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