

# RAP\* Time



## RURAL CENTER *for* AIDS/STD PREVENTION

A JOINT PROJECT OF  
INDIANA UNIVERSITY, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY,  
AND UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

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

Vol. 19, No. 7, July, 2015

## Medicated sex associated with unsafe sex in men and women and STI diagnosis in men

The use of medication to enhance sexual functioning has increased in recent years. Foremost are PDE-5 inhibiting drugs, like Viagra, that treat erection difficulties. Medication for women largely focuses on low sexual desire and is more limited in comparison to drugs for men.

Recreational drugs such as crystal methamphetamine are sometimes used to enhance arousal and promote more adventurous sexual behavior and are often used in combination with PDE-5 inhibitors.

Little is known about medicated sex at the population level. Hence, this investigation was to prevalence of medication use to assist sexual functioning in Britain and to identify associated

### Methodology

Data from the British National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (Natsal-3) described use of medication to enhance sex (ever and last year). In-persons interviews and computer-assisted interviews were conducted between September 2010 and August 2012.

Analysis of data for last year use of medication was limited to men

as the same analysis was not possible for women due to low numbers using medication for sex.

### Outcomes of the Study

The study sample was limited to 6863 and 7067 sexually experienced men and women, respectively. Major findings include:

- Ever use of medication was 12.9% for men and 1.9% for women.
- For both genders, ever use of medications was associated with low overall sexual functioning in last year.
- An association was found between ever use of medication with reporting higher number of lifetime sexual partners and with unsafe sex (reporting two or more partners, but no condom use in the last year) but the associations were stronger for men than for women.
- 7.2% of men reported medicated sex last year. Medication use was associated with reporting 3 or more partners in last year and eight or more occasions of sex in the past 4 weeks.
- In men, strong associations were found with using the internet to find a partner in the past year and with paying for sex.

- In men, unsafe sex (two or more partners and no reported condom use in the last year) and STI diagnosis in the past five years was associated with medication use.
- In men, the association with high-risk was not restricted to those practicing same-sex sex.

### Implications for Prevention

This study found that medication use to enhance sexual functioning was reasonably common in Britain, more in men than women. It was associated with unsafe sex and use of other drugs in men and women and not confined to high-risk groups. In men, it was also associated with recent STI diagnosis.

With the increasingly easy access to these medications without prescription, better professional and patient education about the potential unsafe behavior with their use is needed.

### SOURCE:

Mitchell, K. R., et al. (2015, June 19). Medicated sex in Britain: Evidence from the third National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles. *Sexually Transmitted Infections*, doi.org/10.1136/sextrans-2015-052094

### Alcohol use associated with casual sex

Causal sexual relationships and experiences (CSRE) is a term used to describe relationships that are causal and sexual in nature; that is, involve sexual behavior outside of a committed, romantic relationship. CSREs include hookups, one-night stands, friends with benefits, and booty calls.

This study conducted a meta-analytic review of the association between alcohol use and engagement in CSREs focusing on community and college samples (29 studies).

Results from the meta-analysis indicated that alcohol use was significantly associated with engaging in CSRE. Age significantly moderated the effect of alcohol use on CSRE engagement such that the association was greater for emerging adults (ages 18-24 years) than older adults.

The study found no significant differences between studies conducted using college and non-college samples.

SOURCE: Claxton S. E., et al. (2015). The association between alcohol use and engagement in casual sexual relationships and experiences: A meta-analytic review of non-experimental studies. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 44, 837-856.

### Drastic increase of HIV prevention needed to avert AIDS resurgence

United Nations disease experts stated that the global HIV epidemic could resurge within five years unless drastic efforts to prevent AIDS occur. The medical panel, commissioned by *The Lancet* medical journal noted that even though access to AIDS treatment drugs has increased, the rate of new HIV infections is not falling fast enough.

Peter Piot, director of the London School of Hygiene & Tropic Medicine stated that merely sustaining current efforts will not be enough and that we cannot treat ourselves out of the AIDS epidemic. Geographic growth in some areas is increasing the number of newly infected persons who will need lifelong treatment.

Global data suggest a tipping point has occurred in the AIDS epidemic for the first time with the annual number of new HIV infections lower than the number of HIV patients being added to those receiving treatment. However, recent research shows clear evidence of resurgence HIV epidemics among high-risk populations, such as gay men in Europe, North America and Asia.

SOURCE: Drastic acceleration of HIV fight needed to stop AIDS resurgence. *Medscape*, June 25, 2015.

### Immediate HIV antiretroviral therapy found beneficial

Randomized trials compared HIV+ adults with CD4+ count of 500 cells per cubic millimeter or more who were given antiretroviral therapy immediately to those who deferred to CD4+ count of more than 350. 4685 patients were followed for 3 years. Data revealed that the initiation of ART in HIV+ adults with CD4+ counts of more than 500 provided net benefits over starting therapy in patients after their CD4+ count declined to 350.

SOURCE: The INSIGHT START Study Group. (2015). *Initiation of antiretroviral therapy in early asymptomatic HIV infection*, 373, 795-807.

### Trichomoniasis most common nonviral STI

Trichomoniasis is the most prevalent nonviral STI in the U.S., affecting 3.7 million persons. 13% of black women are infected compared to 1.8% of non-Hispanic white women. *T. vaginalis* affects about 11% of women, aged 40 years or less. The prevalence of trichomoniasis among men who have sex with men is low.

SOURCE: CDC. (2015). Trichomoniasis. Atlanta, GA.

**RAP\* Time** is a monthly AIDS/STD prevention bulletin published by the Rural Center for AIDS/STD Prevention (RCAP) at Indiana University, Bloomington. RCAP is a joint project of Indiana University, University of Arizona, and University of Kentucky. The major focus of RCAP is the promotion of HIV/STD prevention in rural America, with the goal of reducing HIV/STD incidence.

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

**Senior Director**  
 William L. Yarber, HSD  
 Indiana University, Bloomington  
**Co-Directors**  
 Janet N. Arno, MD  
 IU School of Medicine, Indianapolis  
 Anne M. Bowen, PhD  
 University of Arizona  
 Richard A. Crosby, PhD  
 University of Kentucky  
 Beth Meyerson, MDi, PhD  
 Indiana University, Bloomington  
 Mohammad R. Torabi, PhD  
 Indiana University, Bloomington

**Rural Center for AIDS/STD Prevention**  
 Indiana University  
 801 East Seventh Street  
 Bloomington, Indiana  
 47405-3085

Phone, Fax, E-mail, web page:  
 Voice and TDD: (812) 855-7974  
 (800) 566-8644  
 FAX line: (812) 855-3936  
 aids@indiana.edu  
 http://www.indiana.edu/~aids