

# RAP\* Time



## RURAL CENTER *for* AIDS/STD PREVENTION

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

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

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## Many single women, aged 20-44, are at risk for sexually transmitted diseases

Compared to interest in adolescent sexual behavior, little attention has been directed toward the sexual behavior of American single adult women. This age group is important as the median age for first marriage rose from 22.0 years in 1980 to 25.3 years in 2002. As of 2002, 40% of women, aged 25-29, had never married. 37% of women aged 20-44 are single. For the past decade, "abstinence until marriage" has been promoted by the U.S. federal government, with the target population being recently expanded to unmarried adults up to 29 years old.

This study assessed the extent to which single, adult women are sexually active and at risk of poor sexual and reproductive health outcomes.

### Methodology

Most of the data were from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), a multistage, stratified, clustered sample design. The NSFG used face-to-face interviews to collect information about sexual behavior including current union status (single, cohabitation, married). A month-to-month calendar was employed to elicit detailed re-

sponses about sexual activity and contraceptive use. 36% or 1.86 million U.S. women, aged 20-44, in 2002 were single.

### Outcomes of the Study

Participants were 6,493 single, adult women, aged 20-44 at the time of the interview.

Major findings include:

- 89% of single women were sexually experienced, and 70% were currently sexually active, compared to 95%-96% of married or cohabiting women.
- On average, sexually experienced single women had sexual intercourse seven of the last 12 months, in contrast to 11 months for married and cohabiting women.
- Single women were more likely to have had two or more intercourse partners in the year (22%) than were either cohabitating (9%) or married women (2%).
- More than one-quarter (28%) of single women with multiple partners had never used condoms in the last year, and more than half had used them inconsistently.
- Single women (36% of women aged 20-44) represented 27% of these who were sexually active, 82% of those with multiple

partners, and 37% of those at risk for unintended pregnancy.

- The 20-29 age single women were more at risk than teenage females because a higher proportion were sexually experienced, sexually active for more months in the year, and less likely to have health insurance coverage through their parents.
- Compared to older women, 20-29 year olds were more likely to be sexually active, have multiple partners, and be at risk for unintended pregnancy.

### Implications for Prevention

This study found that nine in 10 single women were sexually experienced and seven in 10 had intercourse in the past three months.

With the high level of sexual activity found in this analysis, the behavioral changes needed for success of current abstinence until marriage promotion would have to be phenomenal.

### SOURCE:

Lindberg, L., & Singh, S. (2008). Sexual behavior of single adult American Women. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 40, 27-33.

### Small city, indoor MSWs posed little HIV risk to clients

This study collected data from 30 male sex workers (MSWs) of a single male indoor, escort agency within a small city (pop=49,000).

87% indicated having been tested for HIV. One reported being HIV-positive and had not escorted once learning of status. One-fifth indicated lifetime history of STD infection. Three-fourths involved oral and anal intercourse. All who reported oral sex had received oral sex and about two-thirds had performed oral sex. Men were evenly divided on their role during anal sex.

The escorts almost always used a condom during anal sex with a client no matter their sexual role. Most indicated that they rarely used condom during oral sex with client regardless of their role; but, men reported that they or their client rarely ejaculated semen into the mouth. Also, no semen exchange was reported during anal sex with the client. Hence, few HIV risk behaviors occurred with clients.

SOURCE: Smith, M., D., & Seal, D. W. (2008). Sexual behavior, mental health, substance abuse, and HIV risk among agency-based male escorts in a small U.S. city. *International Journal of Sexual Health*, 19, 27-39.

### Women having anal sex expressed interest in rectal microbicides

In-depth interviews were conducted with an ethnically diverse sample of 28 women who had engaged in anal intercourse. The study was conducted to gain insight into behaviors that may inform formulation and use of rectal microbicides.

Most women participated in anal sex in along with vaginal intercourse. Anal sex typically was not preplanned, and few women reported preparation. Condom use was rare. Most women used saliva, vaginal fluids, prelubricated condoms, or no lubrication during last intercourse. Women were uncertain about the amount of lubricant used during sex, with estimates of 1 to 2 teaspoons.

Women overwhelming expressed interest in rectal microbicides. The results of this study indicate challenges may be that higher amounts of lubricant, in contrast to 1 to 2 teaspoons, would be needed for rectal microbicide and infrequent use of packaged lubricants. Also, male lubricant application may make women's control of rectal microbicides more difficult.

SOURCE: Exner, T. M., et al. (2008). Women's anal sex practices: Implications for formulation and promotion of a rectal microbicide. *AIDS Education and Prevention*, 20, 148-159.

### 5.6% reported ever diagnosed with genital warts

Genital wart history of 8849 sexually active men and women, aged 18-59 years, from the National Health and Nutrition Survey, 1999-2004, was examined. 5.9% reported ever diagnosed with genital warts, with women (7.2%) higher than men (4%). Genital wart history peaked among 25-34 year old women (10.4%) and 35-44 year old men (6.0%).

SOURCE: Dinh, T., et al. (2007). Genital warts among 18-to 59-year-olds in the United States, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1999-2004. *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*, 35, 357-360.

### Majority of chlamydia goes undiagnosed

Chlamydia remains the most commonly reported infectious disease in the U.S. In 2006, 1,030,911 chlamydia diagnoses were reported, up from 976,445 in 2005. Even so, most chlamydia cases are undiagnosed, with an estimated 2.8 cases each year.

SOURCE: CDC. (2008). Trends in reportable sexually transmitted diseases in the United States, 2006. [www.cdc.gov/std/stats/trends2006.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/std/stats/trends2006.htm).

**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 Colorado, 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.

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