

OPEN CONVERSATIONS: CONDOM TALK & STD/STI'S

The Influence of Quality and Frequency of Condom-Use Communication on STI/STD Rates

Among College Students in San Diego

Emily Lee, Valerie Miranda Serena, Melody Torres



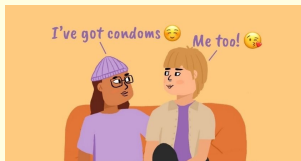
Objectives

- Identify how frequently and in what contexts college students in San Diego discuss condom use with their partners
- Determine whether increased and higher-quality communication about condom use is associated with lower STI/STD prevalence.



Background

- Young adults (25% of the sexually active population) account for nearly 50% of the 20 million new STI cases reported annually in the U.S.
- 1 in 4 college student has a sexually transmitted infection, with HIV, herpes, chlamydia, and gonorrhea being the most common.
- Lack of communication about condom use is a significant but often overlooked risk factor for STI exposure.
- Effective communication about condom use is essential for reducing STI risk, highlighting the need for better education on sexual negotiation skills.

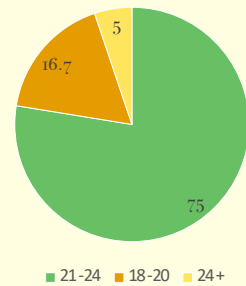


Methods

- Cross-sectional study utilized a web-based questionnaire administered via Qualtrics that was distributed to college students in San Diego through peer outreach and Reddit
- The use of SPSS was done to conduct descriptive statistics and chi-square tests to analyze associations between condom-use communication and STD/STI risk



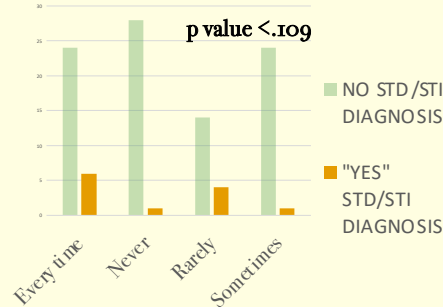
Percent of Ages of Participants



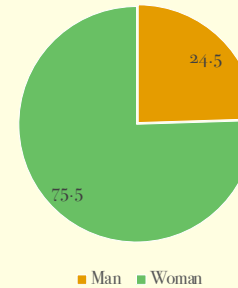
Results

A total of 54 individuals participated in this research study.

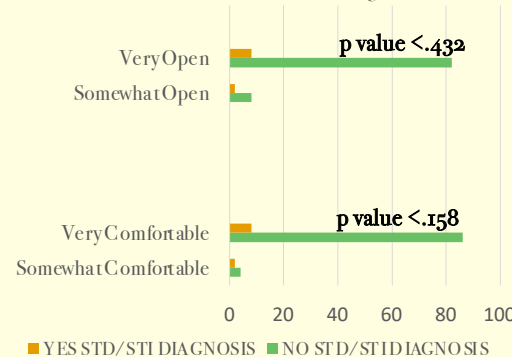
Percent of Condom Use Communication vs. STD/STI Diagnosis



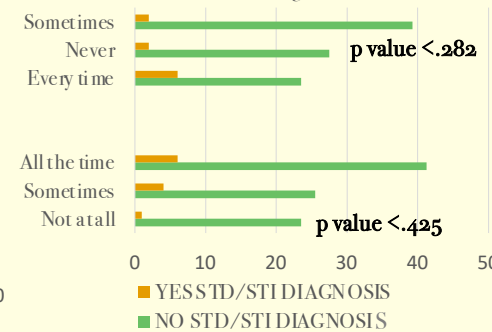
Percent of Gender Identities of Participants



Percent of Comfort and Openness of Condom Use Communication vs. STD/STI Diagnosis



Percent of Using Condom AFTER Communication and Using Condoms vs. STD/STI Diagnosis



Conclusion

- No statistically significant association between the quality and frequency of condom-use communication and STD/STI rates were found.
- The findings may indicate that college students in San Diego already have a strong foundation in sexual health education and condom-use awareness, making communication a less decisive factor in STD/STI prevention. If students are well-informed and proactive about protection, the influence of verbal discussions may be reduced.
- With only 54 participants, the study may have been underpowered to detect a significant association. A larger sample size or a more diverse participant pool might yield different results. Future studies should expand participant recruitment to strengthen statistical validity

Policy Implications

- It is suggested that public health policies must integrate communication-focused strategies into sexual health education to improve the quality of partner communication and STD/STI prevention
- Given that 31% of respondents never discussed condom use, targeted intervention should be developed to encourage open and consistent communication between partners. Public health campaigns should focus on normalizing discussions around safe sex practices.
- The study suggests that some students may already be well-educated on condom use, but continued promotion of routine STD/STI screenings can help maintain low infection rates. Offering free or reduced-cost testing on campus and integrating STD/STI screenings into routine health visits may improve early detection and treatment.

Acknowledgments

- We sincerely thank Dr. Annie Nguyen for her guidance and support throughout this research study. We appreciate her mentorship, encouragement, and dedication to fostering research in public health.

References

1. Caprock Health System. (n.d.). What every college student needs to know about STDs. *Caprock Health System*. Retrieved October 26, 2024, from <https://www.caprockhealth.com/collegestudents-need-to-know-about>
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024, March 26). Sexual risk behaviors. *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
4. CollegeStats. (n.d.). College sexual exposure. *CollegeStats*. Retrieved October 26, 2024, from <https://www.collegestats.org/colleges/collegiate-sexual-exposure>
5. Dijkster, Y., Koss, K., Miskakin, M., Melik, A., Jurevs-Savereis, A., & Borzani, J. (2014). Sexual behaviour and condom use as a protection against sexually transmitted infections in student population. *Collegian Antropologicum*, 30(1), 31-37.
6. Ellison, B., Cozler, E. W. S., Miller, E., Stokes, L. R., & Hill, A. V. (2022). Sexual communication and sexual consent self-efficacy among college students: Implications for sexually transmitted infection prevention. *The Journal of Adolescent Health*. *Official Publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine*, 75(1), 28-39. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.09.004>
7. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
8. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
9. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
10. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
11. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
12. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
13. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
14. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
15. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
16. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
17. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
18. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
19. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>
20. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/sexual-activity.htm>