

Background

About 55% of college-age women between the ages of 20-24 have reported an unintended pregnancy because of unprotected sex practices.¹

Contraception methods used vs. preferred if given the choice are explained by barriers that mainly involve lack of insurance, coverage, and out-of-pocket costs.²

Research shows that when prices for a particular method of contraceptive increase, the demand for it decreases.³

Covering condoms and hormonal contraceptives may increase correct and continued safe sex practices and decrease unplanned pregnancies.

Objectives

- To determine if cost is a barrier to accessing birth control amongst college students.
- To address whether cost impacts a preferred contraceptive method.

Methods

Data was collected from a 5-minute survey created using Qualtrics.

Survey was distributed to UC San Diego college students through flyers, links, and QR codes.

The survey was active for about three weeks in April-May of 2022, collecting 68 respondents.

Data analysis included general demographics and hormonal and non-hormonal birth control methods.

Bivariate analyses only included female and male respondents. Withdrawal method was excluded as a form of birth control for bivariate analyses

Results

Table 1: Participant Characteristics (N=68)

Characteristic	Percentage	
Gender	Female	55.9%
	Male	39.7%
	Non-Binary	2.9%
	Prefer not to answer	1.5%
Age	18-20	38.2%
	21-23	42.6%
	24-26	14.7%
	27 or Older	4.4%
Race/Ethnicity	Black or African American	4.4%
	Asian	41.2%
	Hispanic or Latino	22.1%
	White	22.1%
	Other	10.2%

Figure 1: Regular Use of Birth Control If It Was Free or Low Cost

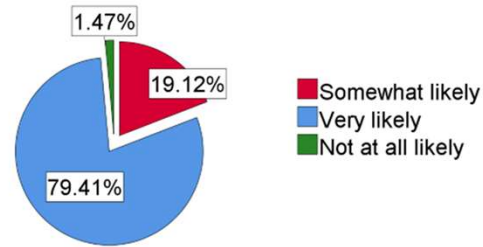


Figure 2: Most Popular Choice of Birth Control By Gender

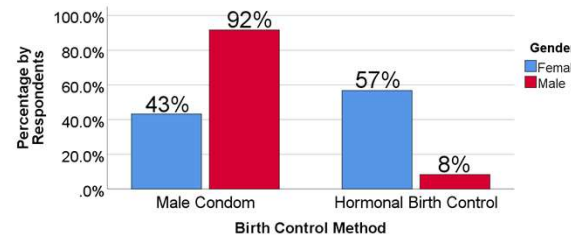
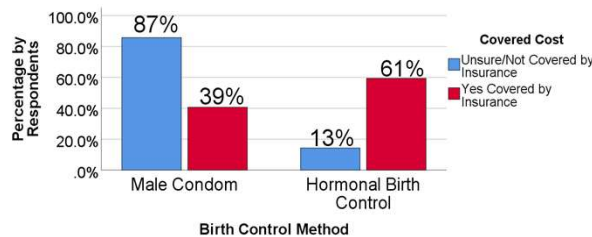


Figure 3: Birth Control Method Covered By Insurance



Conclusions

Price and convenience are the two most prominent factors for UCSD students when choosing a birth control method.

Data shows UCSD students are more inclined to use birth control if it is free/covered by insurance.

Policy Implications

Since the data indicates that male condoms are the most popular choice of birth control, UCSD should acknowledge the downfalls of lacking coverage, and availability on the different types of contraceptives, allowing pharmacies to provide free male condoms to all college students.

College students will have better opportunities to be able to choose:

- The type of contraceptive that works for their bodies.
- Decrease in unintended pregnancies.

Acknowledgements

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