

HIV-risk related sexual practices among Asian young adults

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Objective. In the U.S., cases of AIDS in ethnic minority Asians, unlike Blacks and Hispanics, are not currently disproportionate to their representation in the population (CDC, 1988). Little is known about the sexual practices of unmarried, young Asian adults. The current study examined HIV-risk related sexual behavior in a sample of Asian young adults attending college in the Southern California area to identify the parameters for HIV prevention in this population.

Methods. Sixty five men and 88 women, self-identified as heterosexual Asian, completed questionnaires assessing sexual behavior histories. Approximately half were U.S. born. Subjects ranged in age from 18 to 24 years ($X = 19$ years).

Results. 28 men (44%) and 44 women (50%) had engaged in heterosexual sexual intercourse at least once. Of those who had, less than 1/3 always used birth control and only 11% always used condoms. Yet, 3/4 had used condoms at least once. Nearly 30% of men and 57% of women reported that a sexual partner had objected to using condoms at some time in the past. Fifteen percent had engaged in anal intercourse. None of the men, but 6% of the women, had been treated for a sexually transmitted disease.

Conclusion. Results illuminate factors that contribute to delay of initiation of sexual activities among ethnic minority Asians. Once sexually active, sexual behaviors are consistent with behavioral patterns observed in research on primarily White young adults (Kegeles et al, 1988).

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