

Motivations for Condom Use: Do Pregnancy Prevention Goals Undermine Disease Prevention Among Heterosexual Young Adults?

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Differences in motives for condom use and their implications for understanding frequency of use were investigated in a random, biracial (Black, White) sample of heterosexuals, aged 17 to 25 years ($n = 902$). Results indicated that sexually active young adults—regardless of race, age, gender, or relationship status—were more likely to use condoms to prevent pregnancy than to prevent disease. Reasons for use mediated the effects of relationship status on condom use *per se* and moderated the effects of attitudinal and perceptual variables on condom use. Finally, comparisons among condom users motivated by different prevention goals and nonusers ($n = 388$) revealed that differences among user subgroups were nearly as numerous and, in some cases, more robust than differences between users and nonusers. These findings indicate that condom users comprise distinct subgroups, defined in part by their underlying motives for use, and highlight important conceptual and empirical reasons to distinguish among them.

Key words: condom use, motivations, relationship status, HIV/AIDS, disease versus pregnancy prevention

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