

# Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

Chlamydia infections are the most commonly reported disease in California and untreated infections are associated with infertility and tubal pregnancy.<sup>1</sup> To identify these predominantly asymptomatic infections, national guidelines recommend annual testing for chlamydia for sexually active women age 25 years and younger, and targeted testing of women older than age 25 years with risk factors such as new and/or multiple partners and partners with other sex partners.<sup>2</sup> Healthcare providers providing reproductive health care services to women at risk for chlamydia should discuss possible sexual risk behaviors to determine if a test for chlamydia or other sexually transmitted diseases is warranted.

In 2004, 2,412 California Women's Health Survey (CWHS) participants aged 18-49 were asked "During the past 12 months, did a doctor or other healthcare provider talk to you about your personal sexual behavior?" Women who reported that they had a new male sexual partner in the past 12 months, had more than 1 male sexual partner in the past 12 months, or reported that their male sex partner was likely to have other sex partners were categorized in the analysis as having sexual risk behaviors. Responses were stratified by age and race/ethnicity, and were weighted to the 2000 California population.

Overall, 18.2 percent of all women reported having sexual risk behaviors and 16.8 percent of all women reported that their healthcare

provider had discussed their sexual behavior with them in the past year. Of the women with sexual risk behaviors, 21.1 percent reported a healthcare provider discussion.

- Younger women aged 18-24 with risk behaviors were more likely (35.0 percent) than older women aged 35 and older (12.0 percent) to report a healthcare provider discussion.
- Black/African American women with risk behaviors were more likely (36.4 percent) than White women (29.5 percent), Hispanic women (11.7 percent), and women of Asian/Pacific Islander and Other race/ethnicity groups (17.3 percent) to report a healthcare provider discussion.

Additionally, 41.3 percent of women with risk behaviors reported a chlamydia test in the past 12 months.

- Younger women aged 18-24 with risk behaviors were more likely (55.8 percent) than women aged 25-34 (48.7 percent) and aged 35-44 (28.7 percent) to have had a chlamydia test in the past year. Overall, 51.0 percent of all young women reported a chlamydia test in the past year.
- White women with risk behaviors (43.7 percent) were more likely than Hispanic women (38.6 percent) to have had a chlamydia test in the past year.<sup>3</sup>

## *Provider Discussion of Sexual Behavior and Chlamydia Testing of California Women with Sexual Risk Behaviors, 2004*

California Department of Health Services  
Division of Communicable Disease Control, Sexually Transmitted Disease Control Branch

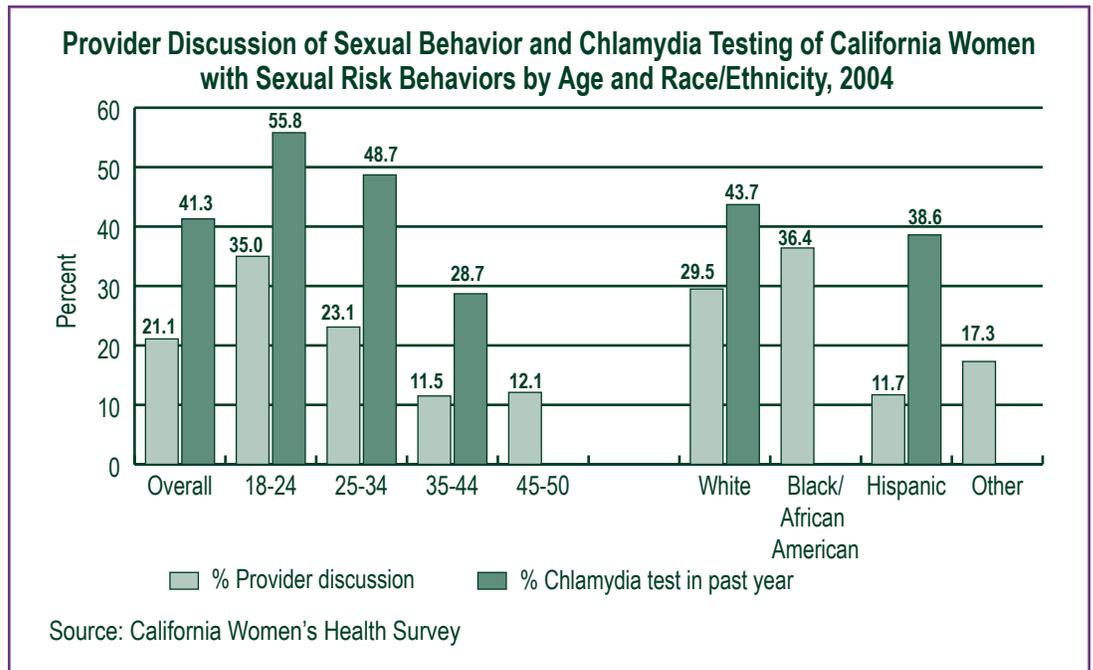
Survey Research Group

**Public Health Message:**  
*Current levels of provider discussion of sexual behavior and chlamydia testing among women with sexual risk behaviors as well as young women in general can be improved. Further efforts are needed to reduce barriers to provider discussion and chlamydia testing of women at high risk for chlamydia infections.*

**Provider Discussion of Sexual Behavior and Chlamydia Testing of California Women with Sexual Risk Behaviors, 2004**

California Department of Health Services  
 Division of Communicable Disease Control, Sexually Transmitted Disease Control Branch

Survey Research Group



- 1 Cates W, Wasserheit JN. Genital chlamydial infections: epidemiology and reproductive sequelae. Am J Obstet Gynecol 1991;164:1771-81.
- 2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sexually transmitted disease treatment guidelines 2002. MMWR 2002;51(No. RR-6):1-84.
- 3 Small numbers of respondents in the Black/African American and Asian/Pacific Islander and Other race/ethnicity categories did not allow for stable estimates of chlamydia testing.

Submitted by: Joan Chow, Julie Lifshay, and Gail Bolan, California Department of Health Services, Sexually Transmitted Disease Control Branch, (510) 620-3718, jchow@dhs.ca.gov; Ann Webb, Survey Research Group, Public Health Institute, (916) 779-0287, awebb@surveyresearchgroup.com

For additional copies of CWHS 2003-2004 Data Points please contact the Office of Women's Health:

Download copies at the Office of Women's Health website  
[www.dhs.ca.gov/director/owh](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/director/owh)

or contact OWH staff at P.O. Box 997413, MS 0027, Sacramento, CA 95899-7413 or call (916) 440-7626.