



CWHS

# Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE 2005 CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

Concurrent sexual partnership, or overlapping partnerships in a given time period, increases the risk of sexually transmitted disease (STD) transmission. This type of sexual partnering can efficiently spread STDs because an infected individual can infect other partners in a relatively short period of time.<sup>1,2</sup> Medical provider assessment of whether a woman's partner has other sex partners can help direct efforts for targeted STD screening. Data on the prevalence of sexual concurrency among male partners of California women are lacking. The STD Control Branch sought to estimate the prevalence of male partner concurrency and its association with factors related to STD infection (e.g., age, race/ethnicity, marital status).

In the 2004 California Women's Health Survey (CWHS), 2,219 women aged 18 to 50 years were asked: "Thinking about your current or most recent male sex partner, how likely is it that this partner was having sex with anyone else besides yourself while you were together?"

Response options were on a five-item scale and were categorized into two groups for analysis: those responding "Definitely yes," "Very likely" and "Somewhat likely" were grouped into a "Likely" category, while responses of "Not very likely" and "Definitely no" were combined as "Not likely." Highlights of the results are as follows:

- Overall, 11.3 percent of respondents answered "Definitely yes," "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely" that their current or most recent male partner was in a concurrent sexual relationship.
- Higher proportions of Black/African American women (21.0 percent) and Hispanic women (19.2 percent) than

proportions of women who were White (5.9 percent) or of Asian/Other race/ethnicity (6.4 percent) reported that their male partners were likely involved in a concurrent relationship.<sup>3</sup>

- Rates of likely partner concurrency varied across age categories: 18- to 24-year-old women reported the highest rate (15.7 percent), and 45- to 50-year-olds reported the lowest rate (7.8 percent).<sup>4</sup>
- In the 25- to 34-year-old age group,<sup>5</sup> 29.1 percent of Black/African American women, 15.9 percent of Hispanic women, and 4.8 percent of White women reported likely male partner concurrency.<sup>3,6</sup>
- In the 35- to 44-year-old age group, 21.2 percent of Hispanic women, compared with 6.1 percent of White women, reported likely male partner concurrency.<sup>3,6,7</sup>
- In the 45- to 50-year-old age group, a significantly higher rate of likely male partner concurrency was reported among Hispanic women (22.3 percent) than among White women (3.5 percent).<sup>3,6,7</sup>
- Women in committed, unmarried relationships (21.9 percent) reported rates of likely male partner concurrency similar to those reported by women who never married (17.0 percent), while married women (6.7 percent) reported a much lower rate.<sup>3</sup>
- Married Hispanic women (14.1 percent) reported significantly higher rates of likely partner concurrency than did married white women (2.7 percent).<sup>3,6,7</sup>

## Concurrent Sexual Partnerships Among Male Sex Partners of California Women, 2004

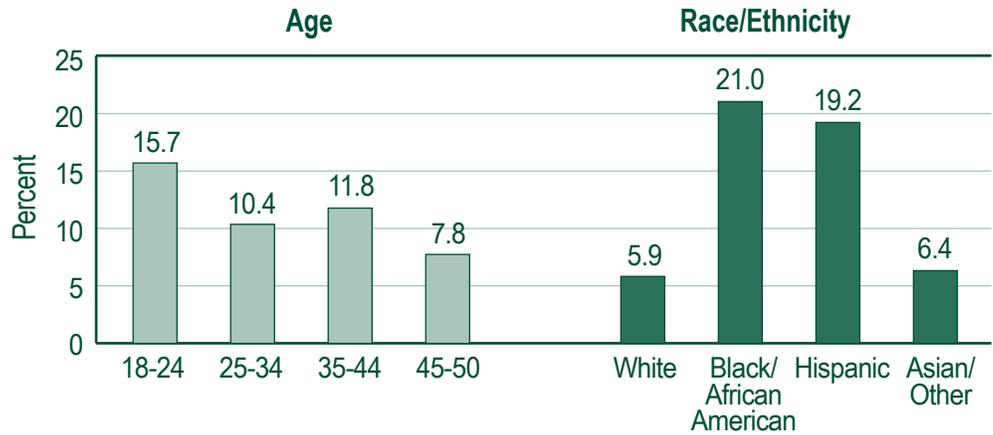
California Department of Public Health,  
Sexually Transmitted Disease Control Branch

**Public Health Message:** Disparities in the prevalence of likely male partner concurrency are consistent with observed racial/ethnic disparities in STD rates. Including partner concurrency status in sexual risk assessment can help guide the need for targeted STD screening and testing, especially in older women and those in committed relationships, who are currently assumed to be at lower risk for STDs.

**Concurrent Sexual Partnerships Among Male Sex Partners of California Women, 2004**

California Department of Public Health,  
Sexually Transmitted Disease Control Branch

**Women Who Reported That It Was Likely Their Male Sexual Partner Was in a Concurrent Sexual Relationship, 2004**



Note: The "Asian/Other" category for the 18- to 24-year-old and 45- to 50-year-old groups contains zero observations.

Source: California Women's Health Survey, 2004

- 1 Adimora AA, Schoenbach VJ, Bonas DM, Martinson FE, Donaldson KH, Stancil TR. Concurrent sexual partnerships among women in the United States. *Epidemiology* 2002;13(3):320-327.
- 2 Aral SO, Patel DA, Holmes KK, Foxman B. Temporal trends in sexual behaviors and sexually transmitted disease history among 18- to 39-year-old Seattle, Washington, residents: results of random digit-dial surveys. *Sex Transm Dis* 2005;32(11):710-717.
- 3  $p < .001$  for all listed comparisons.
- 4  $p < .05$ .
- 5 Inadequate sample size ( $n < 10$ ) for 18- to 24-year-olds did not allow for stable estimates by race/ethnicity.
- 6 Inadequate sample size ( $n < 10$ ) for Asian/Other did not allow for a stable estimate for this age group. (The Asian/Other group also includes American Indians/Alaskan Natives.)
- 7 Inadequate sample size ( $n < 10$ ) for Black/African Americans did not allow for a stable estimate for this age group.

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