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Predictors of condom use amongst HIV-infected individuals receiving Antiretroviral Therapy (ART)

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Abstract

Background:

The relationship between HIV+ status awareness and condom use patterns is unclear. The influence of knowledge of HIV status on sexual behavior has not been well studied in Africa, where positive prevention could potentially have the greatest impact

Objective:

To determine the influence of HIV+ status awareness and other social and demographic factors on condom use following study enrolment.

Method:

Our study was a sub-study of the Starting Antiretroviral Therapy at Three Points in Tuberculosis (SAPiT) trial. A behavioural questionnaire was administered to 642 patients at an urban clinic located in Durban, South Africa. Consistent condom use was defined as reported condom use during last sex act at months 6, 12, 18 and 24 of follow-up. Patients were divided into 2 groups: those who were aware of their HIV+ status prior to study enrolment (Group A) and those who only learned their HIV+ status at the time of study enrolment (Group B). Generalized estimating equations were used to assess factors associated with condom use at last sex act over time.

Results:

At baseline, a total of 150 (46.4%) in group B reported condom use at their last sex act compared to 174 (59.0%) in group A (p=0.002). However, at month 24 the rate of condom use was not significantly different (86.0% vs. 83.5%, p=0.57) in groups B and A respectively. Reported consistent condom use at last sex act was significantly higher in group A compared to group B (53.3% vs. 46.7%, p=0.01). HIV+ status awareness did not predict condom use over time [odds ratio (OR):1.2; 95% confidence interval (CI): 1.9-1.5; p=0.15].

Male patients were more likely to use condoms at last sex act (OR: 2.7; 95% CI: 2.2–3.43; p<0.01). Older patients (OR: 0.8; 95% CI: 0.7–0.8; p<0.01), being never married (OR: 0.7; 95% CI: 0.5–0.9; p=0.01) or divorced/never married (OR: 0.5; 95% CI: 0.3–0.9; p=0.01) and being under the influence of alcohol during their last sex act (OR: 0.3; 95% CI: 0.2–0.4; p=<0.001) were less likely to use condoms at their last sex act.

Conclusion:

Knowledge of HIV+ status is significantly associated with consistent condom use. Age, gender, marital status and alcohol consumption are significant predictors of condom use during last sex act.