

Preference for Variety of Condom Types in a Cohort of South African MSM from Port Elizabeth and Cape Town

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Background

Consistent use of condoms during anal intercourse is a central component of effective comprehensive HIV prevention for men who have sex with men (MSM), including those living in Africa.

Previous research has shown that having a choice of condom brands and types may improve condom use among MSM.

There are no reports of condom brand/type preferences among African MSM.

This information may be useful for prevention programs attempting to increase condom utilization among MSM, particularly those who are looking to increase condom choices for clients.

Methods

Study - Sibanye Health Project

- ◆ Community recruitment methods
- ◆ Adult MSM and transgender women
- ◆ Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, South Africa
- ◆ Baseline Visit - HIV screening, other labs, survey
 - ⇒ Free starter package of condoms with all 7 brand-types
- ◆ Follow-up Visits every 3-6 months through 1 year - repeat HIV screening (for baseline negative), other labs, survey
 - ⇒ Filled requests (tracked distribution) for additional free condoms by brand-type
 - ⇒ Condom satisfaction survey for all brand-types

Condom Preferences

- ◆ Other than Choice (6%) and TheyFit (7%) condoms with low requests, all other brand-types were similarly requested again by participants (range of 75-93% of participants requested; all 2-way Pearson correlations $p < 0.001$) and were combined for analysis.
- ◆ Condom preferences reported as standard (Choice) condoms compared to the 6 other brand-types (excluding TheyFit) overall, by city and baseline HIV status.

◆ Net gain in new condom users = Users since study started - Users before

Choice is a standard condom and is the most commonly available in South Africa.

CONDOM SCORECARD			
Use this card to rate how much you like each type of condom. Fill out the card soon after using each condom. Bring this card next time you come to the clinic.			
1 Condom Use: (tick all boxes that apply)			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2 Rating: (tick 1 box per condom)			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Note: Condom brand names may be registered trademarks.

Results

Through June 2016, we enrolled 201 participants and conducted 1235 follow-up visits.

We have distributed nearly 20,000 condoms to our participants. Almost all participants have requested additional other condom varieties compared to only 13 requesting additional standard condoms.

There were no notable differences in condom preferences between cities.

Persons who were HIV-positive at baseline all requested other condom varieties and none requested standard condoms.

The mean satisfaction rating for standard condoms was significantly (t-test $p < 0.001$) lower than for other condoms.

There was a net loss of standard condom users after the study start, but a net

Participants who Requested Additional Condoms at Follow-up Visits - Sibanye Health Project, 2015-2016

	Other Condoms n (%)	Standard Condom n (%)
Total (N=201)	191 (95%)	13 (6%)
City		
Cape Town (N=100)	94 (94%)	2 (2%)
Port Elizabeth (N=101)	97 (96%)	11 (11%)
HIV status at baseline visit		
HIV-negative (N=167)	157 (94%)	13 (8%)
HIV-positive (N=34)	34 (100%)	0 (0%)
Number of condoms distributed	19,533	116
Mean (SD) satisfaction* (N=99)	4.3 (1.0)	2.1 (1.2)
Net new condom users (N=99)	33**	-27

* Mean satisfaction was scaled based on 1 = low satisfaction (frown face) to 5 = high satisfaction (smile face).

** Mean of net new condom users for other condoms brand-types.

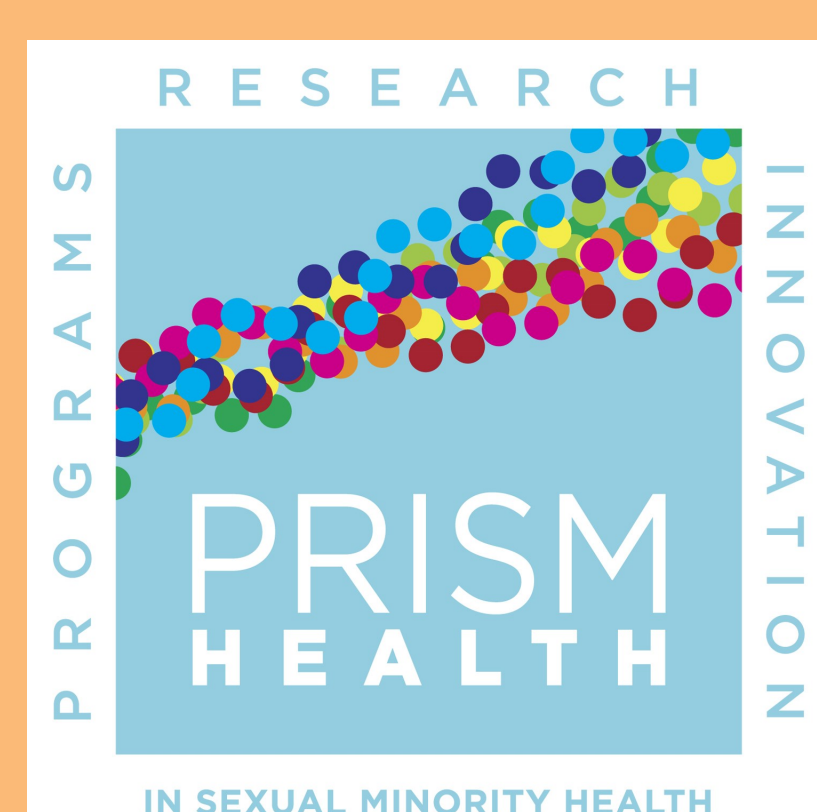
Conclusions

South African MSM in our cohort do not prefer the most commonly available condom brand when given a choice of other types of condoms.

Our findings also suggest that having other types of condoms may also increase the number of MSM using condoms.

Further research is warranted to determine whether condom preferences and distribution are associated with actual usage and will be done with prospective data when our study concludes at the end of 2016.

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