

EXERCISE OF ADOLESCENT SEXUALITY: THE USE OF MALE CONDOM BY TEENAGERS

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ABSTRACT

This is an exploratory and descriptive study with a quantitative approach, conducted with 71 teenagers who participate in the group AdoleScER, in Recife, Pernambuco, which aims to investigate the knowledge and information of teenagers about condoms. Data were collected through the application of the adapted model of questionnaire KAP (Knowledge, attitudes and practices) and analyzed using the software Epi6 and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. The male condom has been known for 68 participants, the information on this group were acquired in the group AdoleScER (25%) and in school (24.3%), 4.2% of subjects use a condom to prevent pregnancy, 4.2% for prevent Sexually Transmitted Infections, 7% reported that one of the reasons for not using condoms is the reduction of sexual pleasure, if the partner does not want to use a condom at the time of the sexual intercourse; 8.4% insisted on the use and refused to have intercourse without a condom; and 8.4% answered that they always use in stable relationships. These results guide for the implementation of actions for sexual health education, such as the proper use of condoms to teenagers.

Keywords: Adolescents. Sexually Transmitted Diseases. Condoms.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is characterized as a phase of life marked by physical, psychological, emotional and social changes that occur between childhood and adulthood, which influence the formation of personality and decision making^(1,2).

The changes of this phase make that the teenagers live intensely their sexuality. This refers to a complex set of behaviors involving search for personal satisfaction, further than biological and genitals aspects. This is something important in the construction of identity and it is essential to the full development of the human being. Sexuality reflects love, affection, pleasure seeking and also genital, that must be placed in the context of relationships, pleasure and responsibility⁽³⁾.

The exercise of sexuality has implications in the reproductive process and the biopsychosocial health of adolescents. The release of traditions and sexualization by the media has encouraged them to have a sexual initiation increasingly early. Their decision to initiate sex without planning and with proper use of protection can lead to situations such as the occurrence of

unwanted pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted infections - STIs. Such situations affect not only during adolescence but also in adulthood⁽⁴⁾. It is known that the use of male or female condoms is double protection for adolescents, because it reduces the possibility for the occurrence of pregnancy and STI⁽²⁾.

In regard to this matter, which reflects the need of condom use by adolescents as a method of prevention and sexual health promotion and nursing commitment to the construction and significance of self-care for this group, this research was developed to investigate the knowledge and information from adolescents about male condom. Studies reveal that the male condom is best known by the public as a way of preventing teenager's STIs, the Human Immunodeficiency Virus - HIV and also as a contraceptive method at the expense of the female condom, a fact that is associated to disclosure by media, accessibility in health services, low cost and appearance^(4,5,6).

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive exploratory study of quantitative approach undertaken in the group

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AdoleScER - Health, Education and Citizenship, which is a civil society organization in Recife/PE (Brazil), whose purpose is to contribute to human development with educational activities, based on values such as peace, love and non-violence. Working in communities of Santo Amaro, Santa Luzia, Roda de Fogo e Caranguejo, the group serves children and adolescent students of low-income who become multipliers and share responsibility for improving their quality of life.

A hundred nine adolescents of both genders attend the group, aged from 10 to 15 years-old. To participate in the study, the inclusion criteria were that the father, mother or custodian understands the requirements and procedures of the study explained in terms of consent, giving their permission for the teenager to participate in research. Another criterion was that the teenager should be in the age group of 10 to 14 years-old, due to the early stage of this period is a great turbulence linked to major changes, especially in body which impose other changes in psychical, emotional, and social, in relation to family, the beginning of the formation of peer groups and making decisions ⁽⁷⁾. The exclusion criteria adopted were the inability or refusal of their father, mother or guardian to provide such authorization and to be out of the age range. Thus, given the criteria, the sample consisted of 71 adolescents of both sexes.

To allow for adjustments of semantic nature and contents of the questionnaire, we conducted a pretest with five teenagers of the same age, volunteers in a community. After answering the questionnaire, the students participated in joint discussion about the experience, exchanging their perceptions about the questions contained in the instrument.

After analyzing the information collected, the questionnaire in the final version was applied with closed and multiple choice questions, covering variables of socioeconomic and demographic identification (age, gender, community they belong; the grade that they study; religion, people they live with; fixed income family), sexual identification variable (age at first intercourse) and variables related to condom use (knowledge of condoms; acquire information about the male condom; reason for using or not using condoms during sexual

intercourse). This instrument was adapted from the model CAP (behaviors, attitudes and practices) 7.0 ⁽⁸⁾ which was used to collect data in the months from May to July 2011 in the four communities in which the group AdoleScER operates and then they were grouped and processed in software such as Epi6 and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 13, being constructed distributions of absolute and simple frequency of evaluated factors.

The research followed the rules of Resolution 196 of October 10, 1996, of the National Health Council, considering the ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice. The investigation of knowledge and information about the use of condoms is part of the project PIBIC "Health promotion and prevention of sexually transmitted infections among students: the use and acceptance of condoms", approved by the Research Ethics of UFPE, under the protocol number 191/2010. Data collection was initiated after authorization by the administrative committee of the group AdoleScER and assignment of the consent form by teenagers' parents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the 71 adolescents who participated in this study, 24 (33.8%) teenagers were 13 years-old, 41 (57.7%) are female, 21 (29.6% each) are from the community Caranguejo or Santa Luzia, 65 (91.5%) studied between 5th and 9th grade, 37 (52.2%) had no religion, 68 (97.1%) were not employed, 24 (33.8%) lived with parents and siblings and family of 36 (52.9%) had as fixed income the Bolsa Família program.

The male condom is known for 68 (95.8%) study participants. On the question of acquisition of such information, the teenager could put a check in more than one alternative. The information was acquired mainly in the group AdoleScER in which we obtained 38 (25%) responses and in the School we obtained 37 (24.3%). We observe a small percentage difference between the results, the fact that the group AdoleScER in formation courses addresses issues such as reproductive health and sexual rights, prevention of STIs / HIV and AIDS, early pregnancy and abortion, supporting

the idea that school is a pillar in the integration between health and education.

The inclusion of sex education in the curriculum of elementary and high schools is a discussion that has been intensified since the 70's⁽⁹⁾. The school, then, to make a commitment to sexual orientation, may be able to contribute to the teenagers in developing communication in interpersonal relationships, work values from critical thinking, understand their own behavior and make responsible decisions about sex life⁽⁹⁾. The school should prevail for allowing the exercise and development of their sexuality responsibly and with pleasure, linked to the full exercise of citizenship in that on one side intends to work the respect for themselves and for each other, seeking to guarantee basic rights to everyone such as health, information and knowledge, which are fundamental for the formation of responsible citizens aware of their capabilities⁽¹⁰⁾.

Thus, the school develops important role, sharing knowledge with quality, being fundamental to sex education for adolescents. Teachers then become a reference for answering questions and providing guidance regarding safer sex practices.

The media (internet, television, magazines, newspapers and ads) were checked by 36 (23.7%) subjects, whereas health services by 24 (15.8%), and friends by 17 (11.2 %). The family was not cited for any teenager. These results are not according to a study which showed family and friends as the main source of information on issues related to sexuality⁽⁴⁾.

The family is understood as a fundamental part of adolescent's sexual orientation and the seeking for information is important because of the participation in the teenager's education. It must be considered that the exercise of sexuality in adolescence is still viewed with prejudice and pervaded by beliefs passed down through the generations. The family, then, must be understood in their historical and ongoing transformation, involving structures, purposes, different meanings and commitments, interactions, role playing and transmission of culture, habits, values, and ways of life⁽⁴⁾.

With friends, teenagers feel more comfortable in talking to people of the same social group, who speak the same language. It is

characteristic of adolescents in a group to seek their identity, the answers to their concerns, the expression of the desires and exchange information and experiences⁽¹¹⁾. However, it is worrying the sharing of experiences among adolescents, as there is possibility of reproduction and adoption of behaviors, practices, and sexual experiences that may endanger reproductive health.

The presented results reinforce the need for greater involvement of health services, which ranked in fourth in the answers of respondents, regarding the development of educational activities with the age group, especially in the implementation of interventions that focus on family participation and formation of group with teenagers who are multipliers of information, in addition to strengthening partnership with schools. It is important for nurses to participate in these activities, training teachers, developing workshops and accompanying families.

About the surveyed adolescents, eight (11.3%) of them already had sexual intercourse and are male, as found in another study⁽¹²⁾. Four (5.6%) reported that the first relationship was when they were 10 years-old. With greater sexual freedom, there is the possibility of multiple partnerships in adolescence, contributing to sexual initiation, reinforcing the concern about sexual behaviors adopted by this group, which can expose them to possible situations of biological vulnerability such as STIs⁽¹³⁾. This fact alludes to the need for action on sexual health in early adolescence, ensuring their sexuality with less risk.

On the practices of the use of condoms, only eight (11.3%) affirmed that; teenagers who had sex responded to the questions. When asked why they used a condom in any sexual relationship, three (4.2%) of the subjects responded *to prevent pregnancy* and three (4.2%) responded *to prevent STI / HIV-AIDS*. The teenager could mark more than one alternative, which suggests the lack of respondents on dual protection against pregnancy and STIs offered by male condoms. Studies present the condom as a contraceptive method known for most adolescents^(4,6). Other studies bring it as the primary method of STI prevention^(2,5). It is noteworthy that the lack of knowledge about sex practices to reproductive health transformations

added to biological, psychological and social changes which characteristic of this phase make the adolescent more vulnerable to recurring damage of unprotected sex ⁽¹³⁾. Given this, it is interesting that the work of sexual health promotion addresses the use of condoms focusing its dual protection.

In contrast, still about the practices of condom use, five teenagers (7%) reported that one of the reasons for not using it is the decrease in sexual pleasure, corroborating what was found in one study ⁽⁹⁾. Adherence to the use of condoms is influenced by beliefs and taboos disseminated in the social environment in which the adolescent lives, which can increase the chances of pregnancy or infection by STIs. The authors/facilitators of the studies, to demystify this concept, demonstrated that latex condom does not decrease the sensitivity of the penis and argued that condoms may even help to improve sexual intercourse because of some innovations, such as various flavors and colors. The teenagers were excited and some of them verbalized that these innovations are legal and can spice up the relationship ⁽⁹⁾.

In the case of the partner does not want to use a condom at the time of the intercourse, six (8.4%) of the subjects insisted on the use and refuse to have sex without a condom. When asked about the use of condoms in a stable relationship (partner with more than a month relationship), six (8.4%) answered that they always use condoms. These results are positive as combining prevention of STIs / HIV, AIDS and pregnancy, as they show that teenagers can be aware of the necessity of condom use, which is also observed in other studies ^(4,5).

With regard to the term "stable relationship", the time of sexual loving relationship considered as stable or not is as a way to recognize the events of daily life from explanations arising from positive attitudes to maintain the social status of the affective sexual union, conditioning loyalty, complicity and responsibility both male and female, which happen because of the need to identify how the partners are. On completion of the pretest, we asked the participants what would be a stable relationship and they indicated that it would be over a month relationship with the same person, "may already be a dating..." as in the words of one of participants.

Even though most teenagers have responded positively to the use of condoms, a survey showed that knowledge, confidence and increased time of relationship contribute to the decreased use of condoms during sex ⁽⁴⁾.

This emphasizes the need for greater dissemination and availability of condoms in activities with adolescents to use becomes frequent and continuous, independent of the type of relationship established, providing autonomy, responsibility, respect, safety and fun for teenagers.

CONCLUSION

The results showed that adolescents knew the male condom and associated its use for pregnancy prevention, STIs / HIV and AIDS, and information acquired in the group AdoleScER. However, further clarification is necessary on dual protection that the method offers. The study participants said they refuse to have sex without a condom and that even in a stable relationship they continue to use it, inferring that the group can be aware of the need to use condoms to prevent both pregnancy and disease. However, cultural aspects, like the belief in decreased pleasure associated with condom use, influenced the response in regard to not using condoms, opening a gap for the vulnerability and requiring increased disclosure.

This study strengthens the idea that the discussion of sexuality in adolescence should include cultural, social and affective aspects that influence the behavior in this period of life. Professionals such as nurses, when working with adolescents, should welcome and wrap them in a dynamic and dialectical way, being the knowledge formed from the exchange of information and discussion of reality, with the awareness of risks and training of autonomy in health care.

It is worthy the importance of programs and actions of health education in the provision of information on sexual health, such as proper use of condoms for adolescents. Such actions must provide opportunities for adolescents for asking, to engage and participate, discussing their questions, exposing their anxieties, beliefs and taboos, and bringing the family to the stage of discussions.

Importantly, the nurse as health educator plays a significant role in sexual and reproductive health of adolescents. The nurse is the transforming agent of reality when plans and executes activities that promote discussion, exchange of experiences, debate, reflection and

modification of teenagers' attitudes, also acting as articulator between the health team, family and school. Thus, the exercise of sexuality in adolescence needs multidisciplinary approach that ensures healthy life with less risk for teenagers and the whole society.

EXERCÍCIO DA SEXUALIDADE NA ADOLESCÊNCIA: USO DO PRESERVATIVO MASCULINO POR ADOLESCENTES

RESUMO

Trata-se de estudo exploratório-descritivo de abordagem quantitativa, realizado com 71 adolescentes do Grupo AdoleScER, da cidade do Recife, Pernambuco, que tem o objetivo de investigar o conhecimento e as informações de adolescentes sobre o preservativo masculino. Os dados foram coletados através da aplicação do modelo adaptado de questionário CAP (conhecimento, atitudes e práticas) e analisados nos programas EPI6 e Statistical Package for the Social Science. O preservativo masculino foi conhecido por 68 participantes; as informações sobre este foram adquiridas no Grupo AdoleScER (25%) e na Escola (24,3%); 4,2% dos sujeitos usam o preservativo para evitar gravidez; 4,2% para prevenir Infecções Sexualmente Transmissíveis; 7% referiram que um dos motivos para não usar o preservativo masculino é a diminuição do prazer sexual; no caso da parceira não querer o usar o preservativo no momento da relação; 8,4% insistiram no uso e recusaram ter relação sem o preservativo; e 8,4% responderam que sempre o usam em relacionamentos estáveis. Tais resultados orientam para a execução de ações de Educação em Saúde sexual, como o uso o adequado dos preservativos para os adolescentes.

Palavras-chave: Adolescente. Doenças Sexualmente Transmissíveis. Preservativos.

SENTIMIENTOS DE LOS CLIENTES PARAPLÉJICOS CON LESIÓN MEDULAR Y CUIDADORES: IMPLICACIONES PARA LA ATENCIÓN DE ENFERMERÍA

RESUMEN

Se trata de un estudio exploratorio-descriptivo de abordaje cuantitativo, realizado con 71 adolescentes del Grupo AdoleScER, de la ciudad de Recife, Pernambuco, que tiene el objetivo de investigar el conocimiento y las informaciones de adolescentes sobre el preservativo masculino. Los datos fueron recolectados a través de la aplicación del modelo adaptado de cuestionario CAP (conocimiento, actitudes y prácticas) y analizados en los programas EPI6 y Statistical Package for the Social Science. El preservativo masculino fue conocido por 68 participantes; las informaciones sobre éste fueron adquiridas en el Grupo AdoleScER (25%) y en la Escuela (24,3%); 4,2% de los sujetos usan el preservativo para evitar el embarazo; 4,2% para prevenir Infecciones Sexualmente Transmisibles; 7% refirieron que uno de los motivos para no usar el preservativo masculino es la disminución del placer sexual; en el caso de que la compañera no quiera usar el preservativo en el momento de la relación; 8,4% insistieron en el uso y rechazaron tener relación sin el preservativo; y 8,4% respondieron que siempre lo usan en relaciones estables. Tales resultados orientan para la ejecución de acciones de Educación en Salud sexual, como el uso adecuado de los preservativos para los adolescentes.

Palabras clave: Adolescente. Enfermedades Sexualmente Transmisibles. Preservativos.

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