

Sexual Behavior:

Details from the National College Health Assessment-II

Student Life Research & Assessment

August 1, 2011

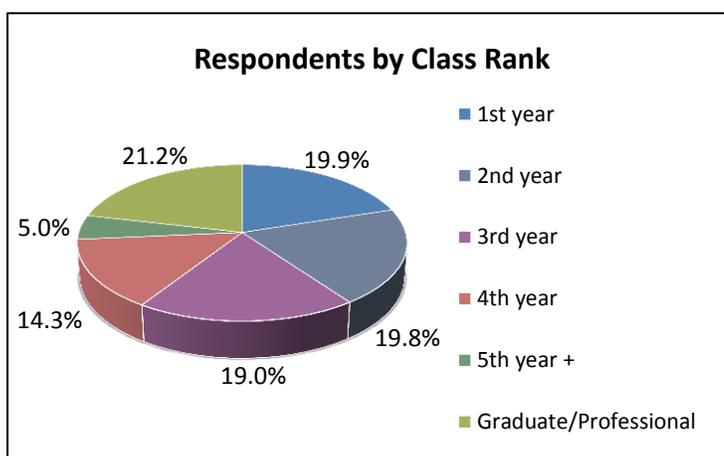
INTRODUCTION

The Ohio State University invited 9,925 students to take The American College Health Association's (ACHA) National College Health Assessment-II in the spring quarter of 2009. It was completed by 2,124 students, yielding a 21.4% response rate. This voluntary, confidential, web-based survey assessed topics of general health. These topics included relationships, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behavior, nutrition, exercise, mental health, sleep, and effects of health on academic performance. This brief provides a detailed look at the issues surrounding Ohio State students and their sexual behaviors.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The average age of the respondents was 22 years old. Approximately 60% identified as female and 40% as male. This survey had an overrepresentation of females; females accounted for only 48.9% of students on campus during the spring 2009 quarter. Almost all (94%) of the respondents were full time students. Around 10% belonged to a sorority or fraternity.

Labels for students' ethnicities in this brief are the shortened terms from the ACHA survey.



While 80.2% of the survey respondents were White, only 74.6% of the overall Ohio State student population was White at the time of the survey. The survey had a smaller Black student representation (5.6%) than the population's total (6.3%), and an overrepresentation of Asian students (9.5%) when compared with the university's total (5.2%) that quarter.

Most student participants (93.4%) identified their sexual orientation as heterosexual, while 6.6% identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or Questioning (LGBTQ).

Ethnicity*	%
Black, non Hispanic	5.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	9.5
White	80.2
Hispanic/Latino(a)	2.5
Multiracial or Biracial	2.9
Other	2.6

**Terms used in ACHA Survey*

HIGHLIGHTS

- Students had an average of 2 sexual partners in the past year.
- A higher percentage of non-spiritually active students had vaginal intercourse in the last 30 days than did spiritually active students.
- Students with higher GPAs were less likely to have had vaginal sex in the last 30 days.
- Nearly 90% of students used birth control the last time they had vaginal intercourse.
- Oral contraception was the most common form of birth control used among students.
- About 14% of students used emergency contraception in the last year.
- One percent (1.0%) of all survey participants became unintentionally pregnant in the last year.

FINDINGS

The survey asked students to report on their sexual activities in the last 12 months, in the last 30 days, and whether or not they had ever done the specified sexual activity. When discussing students' sexual behaviors, this brief specifies from which time range the data are drawn. Any statistics reported in this brief are statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level.

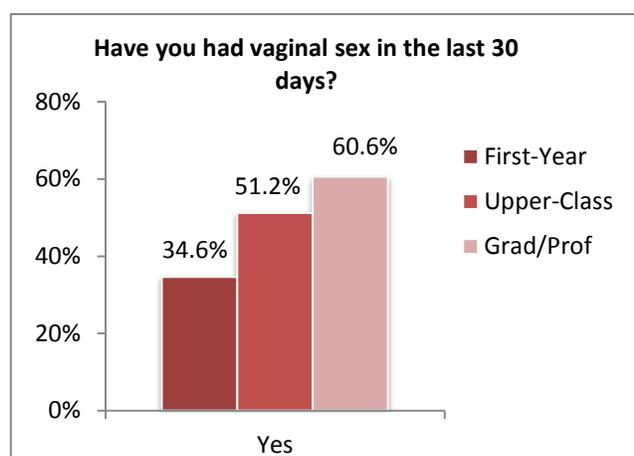
SEXUAL BEHAVIORS

Female students had an average of 1.8 sexual partners in the past year, while male students had an average of 2.3 partners. The table below breaks down students by ethnic group and shows their sexual activity in the last 30 days. Hispanic students had the highest percentage of activity in vaginal and anal sex, while Asian students had the lowest percentage of activity in each category.

Type of sexual activity in the last 30 days:	White	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial
Vaginal intercourse	50.6%	33.9%	59.0%	73.7%	56.0%
Oral sex	48.0%	25.1%	45.5%	57.9%	60.0%
Anal sex	4.1%	1.8%	6.9%	13.2%	4.0%

Vaginal Intercourse

The survey found that more female students (73.1%) than male students (66.4%) have had vaginal intercourse in their lifetimes. Also, more females than males reported engaging in vaginal sex in the last 30 days; 54.1% of female students as compared to 43.2% of males had engaged in the behavior.



When asked about the previous 30 days, 49.9% of all students had vaginal intercourse. About a third (34.6%) of first-year students had intercourse; the percentages increased with class rank. In the graph, *Upper-Class* is defined as sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

Students who reported being *Very Much* spiritually active differed in sexual activity from students who reported they were *Not at All* spiritually active. *Not at All* reflects students who selected *Very Little* or *Not at All*. More non-spiritually active students engaged in vaginal sex in the past 30 days than did spiritually active students. Students who answered they were *Moderately* spiritually active (34.6%) are not shown in the table below.

Have you had vaginal sex in the last 30 days?	Spiritually active	Not spiritually active
Have never done	44.9%	24.5%
Yes, in last 30 days	37.7%	54.2%

Students who engaged in intercourse in the 30 days prior to the survey differ significantly based on their average GPA. Students earning a *C or below* GPA had vaginal sex in the last 30 days at a rate 20% higher than did students with an *A* GPA.

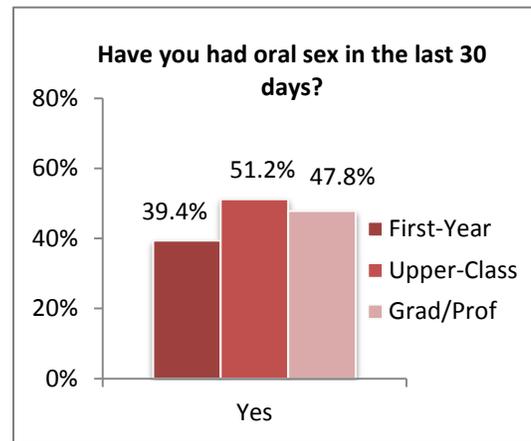
<i>Have you ever had vaginal sex?</i>	GPA: A	GPA: B	GPA: C or below
Never done	33.2%	27.9%	20.1%
Yes	66.7%	72.1%	79.9%

Students who lived in a sorority or fraternity also differed from students who did not. In the 30 days prior to the survey, 59.1% of Greek students had intercourse as compared to 48.7% of non-Greek students.

Oral Sex

Around three quarters (75.6%) of all students surveyed reported having oral sex at some point in their life, and almost half (45.9%) of all students reported having oral sex within the last 30 days. Forty-two percent (42.0%) of males and 48.1% of females had engaged in this activity within the past 30 days.

First-year students were the least likely to have had oral sex in the last 30 days, with 39.4% reporting they had done so, as compared to 51.2% of upper-class students and 47.8% of graduate/professional students.



Anal Sex

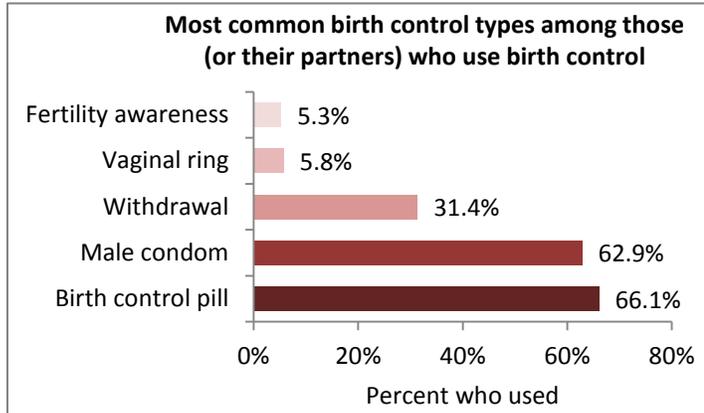
About one quarter (23.4%) of all students surveyed had ever had anal sex. Among LGBTQ students, almost half (47.8%) had engaged in anal sex in their lifetime as compared to 21.0% of heterosexual students. A higher percentage of Greek students engaged in anal sex at some point in their lifetimes (30.6%) than did non-Greek students (22.2%). In the last 30 days, 6.0% of males and 3.3% of females had engaged in anal sex. Two point eight percent (2.8%) of heterosexual students had anal sex as compared to 24.3% of LGBTQ students.

BIRTH CONTROL OVERVIEW

Over 60% of all students answered affirmatively that they or their partners used any form of birth control the last time they had vaginal intercourse. In the following discussions about birth control usage, the percentages refer to the 60.3% of students who answered that they used contraception. Nearly 11% of students for whom the question applied answered either *No* or *Don't Know* (the table at the right breaks down the responses). Among those for whom the question applied, Asian students (79.2%) were the least likely to say they used a method of birth control the last time they had intercourse. In contrast, 90.3% of White students, 87.5% of Hispanic students, and 88.3% of Black students used birth control the last time they had vaginal sex.

<i>Did you use birth control the last time you had vaginal intercourse?</i>	
Yes	60.3%
No	5.9%
Don't Know	1.3%
Does not apply	32.5%

Of the 60.3% of students who used any form of birth control the last time they had intercourse, the most popular types were oral contraception and the male condom. It is important to note that the percentages in the graph to the right add up to more than 100% because some students used more than one form of birth control.

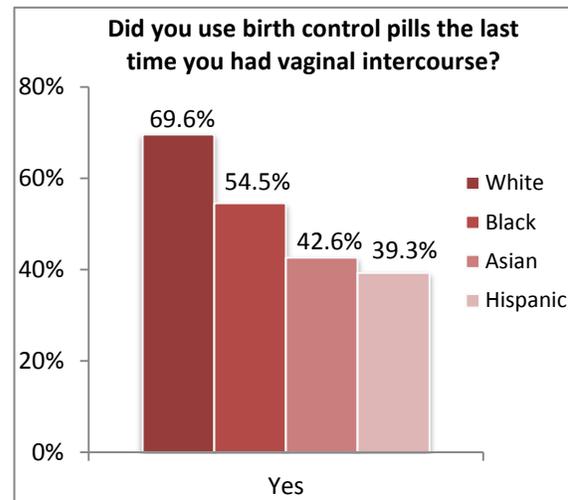


Birth Control by Student Type

In the survey, the 60.3% of all students who answered that they used birth control the last time they had intercourse were routed to further questions about the types they used, so the percentages in this discussion section will pertain only to students who saw these questions.

Among students who used any form of birth control the last time they had intercourse, first-year students were the most likely to use oral contraception, with 69.6% saying they do, as compared to 60.3% of graduate or professional students. For the item that asked if the survey taker or their partner used oral contraception, 67.2% of females responded that they do and 65.6% of males answered affirmatively. Parity of the genders on this item suggests that partners may be communicating about both use and type of contraception, even when the type is used almost exclusively by one gender. Very spiritually active students were the least likely to have used a method of birth control the last time they had intercourse. While around 91.4% of non-spiritually active students used birth control the last time they had intercourse, only 83.7% of *Very Much* spiritually active students did so.

As the graph demonstrates, White students were the ethnic group most likely to have used birth control pills as a birth control method the last time they had intercourse and Asian and Hispanic students were the groups least likely.

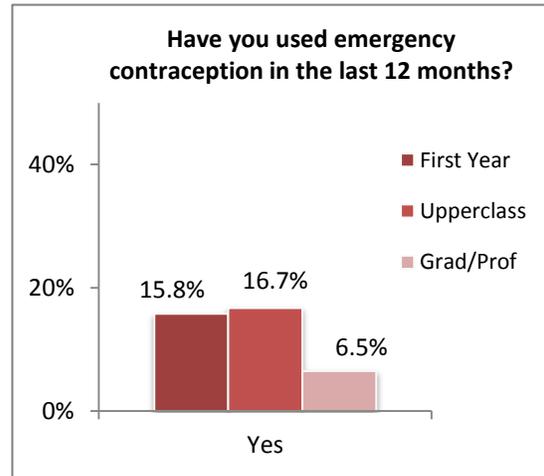


The vaginal ring was used most by graduate and professional students (9.5%) compared with 2.7% of first-year students. First-year students, however, were the most likely to use a male condom the last time they had intercourse with 72.9% saying they did, as compared to 53.2% of graduate and professional students. First-year students and upperclassmen were the most likely to use the withdrawal method of birth control, with 35.3% stating they did, compared to 19.3% of graduate and professional students.

PREGNANCY

In the last year, 14.2% of all students used emergency contraception (which is taken after unprotected sex or failed contraception). In the past year, 1.5% of students became pregnant intentionally, 1.0% became pregnant unintentionally, and 0.8% answered *Don't Know*.

Two percent (2.0%) of upperclassmen unintentionally became pregnant in the last year, which is more than the 0.5% of first-year students or the 0.9% of graduate or professional students. Almost 3% of graduate or professional students became intentionally pregnant, as compared to 0.5% of all other students. Spiritually active students were the most likely to report their pregnancy was intentional (3.9%). Among ethnic groups, Black students (6.5%) were the most likely to report they became unintentionally pregnant. Around 40% of both males and females have received pregnancy prevention information from Ohio State. This number reached 51.0% for African American students but only 32.0% for Asian students.



SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)

The table below displays rates of STI's among Ohio State students. When compared to the rates of all ACHA participants at 117 institutions across the United States, students at Ohio State had lower rates of gonorrhea, chlamydia, and herpes. Ohio State students had slightly higher rates of HPV; the rates of HIV were similar to that reported by the ACHA. The survey reports that 59.1% of students received information on STD prevention from Ohio State.

STI Type	% in last year-OSU students	Rate per 1,000-OSU students	Rate per 1,000-NCHA
HPV	2.2%	22.9	22.0
Gonorrhea	0.1%	1.4	4.0
HIV	0.3%	2.9	3.0
Chlamydia	0.8%	7.7	9.0
Genital herpes	0.8%	7.7	8.0

CONCLUSION

This brief highlights the different sexual behaviors among students at Ohio State. Additionally, it brings attention to the birth control types that are preferred by students. Finally, it gives an overview of pregnancy and STI rates that result from sexual activity among Ohio State students. The Student Wellness Center at Ohio State (swc.osu.edu) provides sexual wellness education, HIV counseling and STI testing, as well as information about contraceptives, healthy relationships, and a list of groups on campus that address sexual risk reduction.