

Study: unprotected sex common among teens

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A study by Brown University in Providence, R.I., has suggested that U.S. teenagers use condoms more often with casual partners than with a main partner.

The study, published in the September issue of the Journal of Adolescent Health, found that teens reported using condoms during sex with a casual partner about half of the time, but only used condoms 37 percent of the time with a main partner -- someone described as a "spouse, lover, or boyfriend or girlfriend," WebMD reported Thursday.

The surveyed teens, recruited from primary care clinics and outreach efforts in Atlanta, Miami and Providence, reported engaging in an average of 20 unprotected sex acts in a three-month period.

"Unfortunately, this reveals that teens may overestimate the safety of using condoms most of the time with a casual partner and underestimate the risk of unprotected sex with a serious partner," said Brown researcher Celia Lescano. "Given these high rates of unprotected sex, teens in both groups may be at risk for contracting HIV and sexually transmitted diseases."

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