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Black girls who abuse alcohol less likely to use condoms

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Black girls who abuse alcohol are more likely to have unprotected sex despite having participated in interventions that stressed the importance of consistent condom use.

The study by Emory University public health researchers is being presented at the International AIDS Conference in Mexico City. It analyzed the alcohol usage and self-reported sexual behavior of 439 sexually active black female girls between the ages of 15 and 21. Some of the girls had previously participated in an HIV intervention that emphasized the importance of using condoms to protect from HIV and STD infection.

The researchers found that girls who used high levels of alcohol reported low rates of condom usage. This was consistent for both young women who had received HIV intervention and education as well as those who hadn't undergone any formal HIV and STD training.

"Our findings suggest that the effectiveness of HIV interventions was adversely affected by alcohol use," says Ralph DiClemente, PhD, Candler professor of public health at Emory's Rollins School of Public Health, and study co-author.

"To develop more effective HIV interventions for alcohol-using adolescent females requires also directly addressing the important role of alcohol use," DiClemente says.

Source: Emory University

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