

RESEARCH BASED TEMPLATE

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CONDOM USE AMONG HORMONAL CONTRACEPTIVE USERS

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Background: Long acting reversible contraception (LARC) includes implantable contraceptive devices and intra-uterine devices (IUD). Whilst highly effective against the prevention of pregnancy, LARC does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Prior research has suggested that users of LARC are less likely to use condoms than users of other hormonal methods of contraception, such as the oral contraceptive pill. This study aims to estimate dual condom/hormonal contraceptive use and compare condom use between LARC users and other hormonal contraceptive users.

Methods: Consecutive women aged between 16 and 24 attending a sexual health and reproductive clinic for youth were asked to complete a survey about their contraception and sexual practices. The outcome measured was condom use at last sex and frequency of condom use (usually/always versus sometimes/not usually/never). Descriptive statistics were used to describe the data. Logistic regression was used to investigate factors associated with condom use.

Results: Overall 294 women completed the survey with a response rate of 96.8%. Overall 23.0 % of women using hormonal contraceptive used condoms at last sex (95%CI 17.2-30.0) and 27.2% used condoms usually/always (95%CI 20.1-34.2). There was no difference in condom use usually/always between LARC users and other hormonal contraceptive users (adjusted odds ratio [aOR], 0.7; 95%CI, 0.3-1.5). Factors associated with dual contraceptive use included having more than 5 sexual partners in the past 3 months (aOR, 3.3; 95%CI 1.1-10.0; $p=0.02$). A longer relationship length was associated with a decrease in dual use (aOR, 0.2; 95%CI, 0.1-0.5; $p<0.01$).

Conclusion: Less than one third of hormonal contraceptive users use condoms always/most of the time. The strongest drivers of dual use are factors that increase risk of STI transmission. Future research should look at education interventions to emphasize use of condoms in high-risk situations to all adolescents, regardless of type of contraception.

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