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## Communicating (and Responding to) Sexual Health Status: Reasons for STD (Non) Disclosure

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### ABSTRACT

This investigation examines the sexual health status of individuals and their attitudes toward STDs and STD disclosure (and reasons for nondisclosure) and response. In doing so, this study provides insight into young adults' sexual practices, attitudes, and behaviors. Two-hundred fifty-three adults of varying relational status participated in an online study about sexual health status, sexual health knowledge, sexual behaviors, relational factors, responses to STD disclosure, reasons for nondisclosure, and if circumstances under which a STD was acquired affected partners' reaction to the disclosure. Results indicated that, although undergraduate students are knowledgeable about safer sex practices and are concerned about STDs and birth control, few "always" practice safer sex. When considering relational status, STD status and disclosure of that status becomes complicated. However, findings of this investigation suggest that potential positive responses to a perceived negative disclosure (i.e., a positive STD status) are possible when certain relational factors exist and the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of the STD involve more external (e.g., didn't know prior partner had STD) versus internal locus (e.g., partner engaged in risk behavior) of control factors.

### KEYWORDS

STDs, Self-Disclosure, Sexual Health, Condom Use, Safer Sex

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