

Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health  
Volume 38, Number 1, March 2006

## Oral Sex and Condom Use Among Young People In the United Kingdom

By Nicole Stone, Bethan Hatherall, Roger Ingham and Juliet McEachran

**CONTEXT:** The development of UK national targets to reduce the transmission of HIV and other STDs has focused health promotion efforts on advocating the use of condoms during penetrative vaginal and anal sex. However, other behaviors that can facilitate STD transmission—such as oral sex and, in particular, fellatio—have received limited attention.

**METHODS:** Between 2003 and 2005, a sample of 1,373 full- and part-time students, primarily aged 16–18, completed questionnaires about their knowledge, attitudes and experiences related to sexual behavior and health. Chi-square tests were used to assess differences by sexual experience and gender. Supplementary data were obtained from sexual event diaries completed by 108 young people.

**RESULTS:** Fifty-six percent of survey respondents had experienced fellatio or cunnilingus, including 22% of those who had not yet engaged in penetrative intercourse. Of young people who had had vaginal intercourse, 70% had previously had oral sex. Among those who had experienced fellatio once, 17% had used a condom, but only 2% of respondents who had engaged in fellatio more than once reported consistent use. Reduced pleasure and lack of motivation, desire and forethought were reasons given for not using condoms during fellatio; hygiene, avoidance of the dilemma of whether to spit or swallow ejaculate, and taste were commonly cited as triggers for use.

**Conclusion:** Greater efforts are needed to publicize the risk of exposure to STDs that many young people face because of unprotected noncoital sexual activities before, as well as after, they enter into relationships involving intercourse.

Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health, 2006, 38(1):6–12

- » [table of contents](#)
- » [search the PSRH archive](#)
- » [guidelines for authors](#)

Nicole Stone is research fellow, Bethan Hatherall is researcher and Roger Ingham is director, all at the Centre for Sexual Health Research, University of Southampton, UK. Juliet McEachran is policy advisor, JSI/Europe, London.

DOI:10.1363/3800606

[Full text in PDF](#)

[Full-featured version available to subscribers](#)



Personal subscribers should contact Wiley customer service with any questions related to their online access. Phone: 1 (800) 835-6770 or E-mail: [cs-journals@wiley.com](mailto:cs-journals@wiley.com).

