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## The Association Between Substance Use, Condom Use and Sexual Risk Among Low-Income Women

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Substance use is frequently assumed to be associated with higher levels of sexual risk-taking and lower levels of condom use. An analysis of 668 black, Hispanic and white low-income women at public health and public assistance facilities in Miami shows that 19% engaged in risky sexual behavior over the preceding six months, 24% in substance use and 31% in condom use. Overall, substance users are nearly four and one-half times more likely to take sexual risks than nonusers, but are about half as likely to have relied on condoms. When the probability of condom use is considered in the context of both substance use and sexual risk, substance users who take sexual risks appear just as likely to rely on condoms as are nonusers who take sexual risks and those who do not (odds of 0.43-0.49). However, substance users who do not take sexual risks are much less likely to use condoms (odds of 0.15). This pattern holds among black, Hispanic and white women, and suggests that perceptions of risk and the risks that partners bring to sexual encounters may be more important determinants of condom use than substance use per se.

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