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## Change in Sexual Behavior With Provision of No-Cost Contraception

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### Abstract

**OBJECTIVE:** To estimate whether providing no-cost contraception is associated with the number of sexual partners and frequency of intercourse over time.

**METHODS:** This was an analysis of the Contraceptive CHOICE Project, a prospective cohort study of 9,256 adolescents and women at risk for unintended pregnancy. Participants were provided reversible contraception of their choice at no cost and were followed-up with telephone interviews at 6 and 12 months. We examined the number of male sexual partners and coital frequency reported during the previous 30 days at baseline compared with 6-month and 12-month time points.

**RESULTS:** From our total cohort, 7,751 (84%) women and adolescents completed both 6-month and 12-month surveys and were included in this analysis. We observed a statistically significant decrease in the fraction of women and adolescents who reported more than one sexual partner during the past 30 days from baseline to 12 months (5.2% to 3.3%;  $P < .01$ ). Most participants (70-71%) reported no change in their number of sexual partners at 6 and 12 months, whereas 13% reported a decrease and 16% reported an increase ( $P < .01$ ). More than 80% of participants who reported an increase in the number of partners experienced an increase from zero to one partner. Frequency of intercourse increased during the past 30 days from baseline (median, 4) to 6 and 12 months (median, 6;  $P < .01$ ). However, greater coital frequency did not result in greater sexually transmitted infection incidence at 12 months.

**CONCLUSION:** We found little evidence to support concerns of increased sexual risk-taking behavior subsequent to greater access to no-cost contraception.

**LEVEL OF EVIDENCE:** II

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