

## **Sex in Peru: Sexual Behaviors in a Nation-Wide Population-Based Survey of Urban Young Adults**

Patricia Garcia, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia, Peru

Cesar Carcamo, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia, Peru

Pablo Campos, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia, Peru

James P Hughes, University of Washington, USA

Geoff P Garnett, Imperial College, United Kingdom

Peter John White, Imperial College London, United Kingdom

James Holland Jones, University of Washington, USA

Marinia Morris, University of Washington, USA

King Holmes, University of Washington, USA

**Objectives:** A survey of sexual behaviors and STD/HIV prevalence in young adult population of 24 cities in Peru was performed in 2002.

**Methods:** 18 to 29 years old adults from randomly selected households completed a face-to-face demographic questionnaire, and a self-administered questionnaire for sensitive sexual behavior questions. Interviewees privately completed the questionnaire, sealed it in an envelope, and deposited it in voting boxes.

**Results:** 7,485 men and 7,774 women completed the behavioral questionnaire. The median age at sexual debut was 18 years for women and 16 years for men. The median lifetime number of sexual partners for women and men were 1 and 3 respectively; sexual activity during the past 12 months was limited to zero or one partner for most men (76%) and women (96%). On average, sexually experienced women were 4.4 years younger than their last partner's estimated age. For 31% of men the last partner was considered casual, compared with 6% for women; 28% of sexually active men and 12% of sexually active women reported starting having sex within a month of meeting their last partner. 1,574 women (30%) reported believing their last partner had another partner while only 824 men (15%) reported that 915 men (12%) reported ever having sex with other men and 3265 (44%) reported sex with female sex workers. 171 females (3%) reported exchanging sex for money/or favors with last partner. Consistent condom use with last partner was reported by 9% of women and 16% of men with regular partners; 24% of men, and 11% of women with casual partners, and by 45% of men with FSW and 32% of men with other male partners.

**Conclusions:** Risky behaviours identified frequently included short courting period, low frequency of condom use with casual partners, FSW and high percent of men having unprotected sex with men.