The More the Party Drugs, the Fewer the Condoms Among Gay Men

August 1, 2014

The number of recreational drugs English gay men take at one time is strongly linked to the likelihood that they will have sex without a condom while under the influence, aidsmap reports. This research is notable because, instead of looking at habitual drug use over time, it examines the link between drug use and condomless sex during discrete occasions. The investigators analyzed data from interviews with 2,142 men who, in 2011 and 2012, provided details about 6,742 sexual encounters. They presented their findings at the 20th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014) in Melbourne, Australia.

The men had a 25 percent likelihood of having sex without a condom when taking no substances, compared with a 30 percent likelihood with one substance, 50 percent with three and 75 percent with five or more. The drugs most strongly tied to sex without a condom were poppers, GHB and crystal meth.

Thirty-one percent of all sexual encounters took place at home with a steady partner and involved minimal substance use; these events had a 41 percent likelihood of not involving condoms. Sixty-two percent of all encounters involved non-steady or anonymous partners and minimal substance use; these had a 23 percent likelihood of not involving a condom. Seven percent of the encounters involved multiple substances with anonymous or non-steady partners, with a 53 percent likelihood of condomless sex.

Men were more likely to use a condom with partners who were anonymous, with whom they had discussed HIV status, and who they knew were a different HIV status than themselves. They were also more likely to use condoms when at a cruising spot or a sex venue.

To read the aidsmap story, click here.

To read the two associated conference abstracts, click here and here.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/drugs-condoms-25953-1093