



SHARP News



Condom Use Among Active Duty, Unmarried Service Members

Condom use at last sexual encounter among unmarried active duty service members in 2002 was recently reported in the 2002 Worldwide Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Military Personnel.

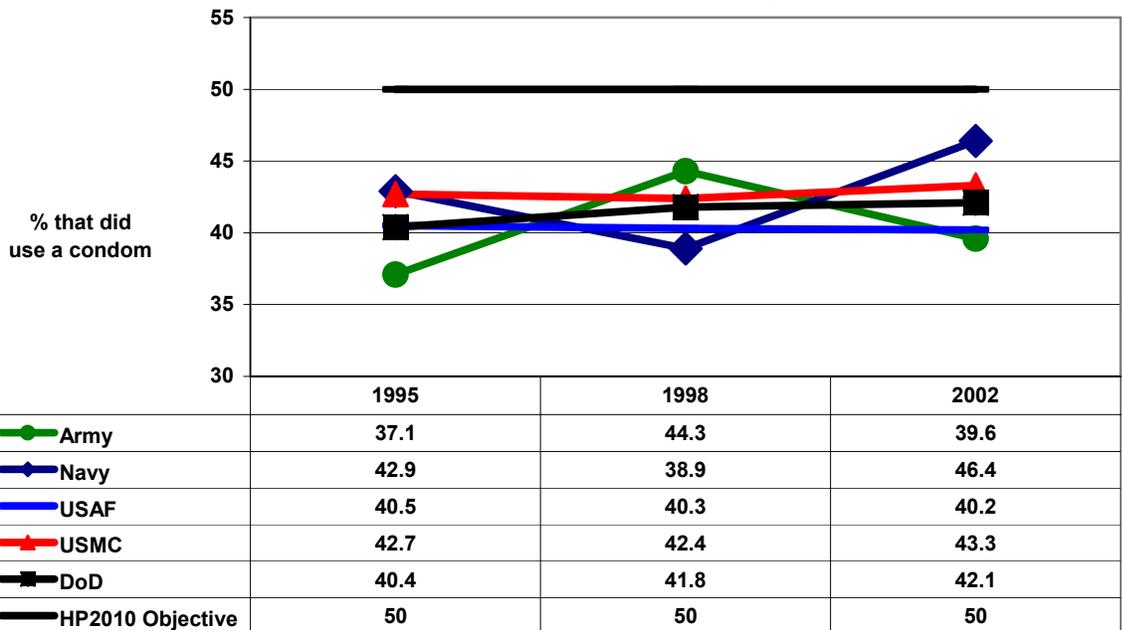
The national Healthy People 2010 objective for condom use at last sexual encounter by unmarried people is not less than 50%. Overall, among the military services, 42.1% said they did use a condom. Males were more likely than females to report they or their partner used a condom (44.6% vs. 33.2%, respectively). Active Duty Sailors, who had the lowest rate among the services when last measured in 1998, had the highest positive response rate in 2002, rising from 38.9 to 46.4%. Among Marines, the rate rose slightly from 42.7% in 1998 to 43.3% in 2002. While condom use by male Sailors and Marines approached 1 of 2, among females condom use lags far behind at only 1 of 3.

Navy Environmental Health Center - Sexual Health and Responsibility Program (SHARP)

Condom Use at Last Sexual Encounter

Among Unmarried Active Duty Members

(source: DoD Worldwide Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Military Personnel)



The correct and consistent use of latex condoms significantly reduces the risk HIV transmission and also reduces the risk of acquiring or transmitting many other sexually transmitted infections. Condoms can also reduce the risk of an unplanned pregnancy. But, for maximum effect, they must be used correctly and consistently. This report demonstrates, again, that condom use among unmarried Sailors and Marines may be improving but is not consistent and falls short of the national objective – particularly among female Sailors and Marines. Perhaps some proportion of our female population does not feel comfortable or empowered to have condoms when and where they may be needed and to insist on their use. Navy medical professionals, leaders, and SHARP advocates can help our people, male and female, understand that it is OK for them to take control of their own safety.

“Chart a Safe Course”

Sexual Health and Responsibility Program (SHARP)

Navy Environmental Health Center, Directorate for Population Health, 620 John Paul Jones Circle Suite 1100, Portsmouth VA 23708-2103
voice: (757) 963-0974 (DSN 377) fax: x-0688 homepage: www-nehc.med.navy.mil/sharp e-mail: sharp@nehc.nar.med.navy.mil
SHARPNews is compiled from various sources. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Navy

It is worth noting that this report does not measure correct condom use. Many studies indicate that a significant proportion of sexually active young Americans do not use condoms correctly.

Just as it is clear that condoms can reduce the negative consequences of sexual behavior, it is clear that we have much room to improve. To help you help our people wear condoms correctly and consistently, be among the first 15 to request from SHARP your free copy of "CONDOMEZE", a 5-minute video with a humorous tone and military theme. Just send an e-mail to <mailto:sharp@nehc.med.navy.mil>

For a graphic of the 1995-2002 condom use rates, see <http://www-nehc.med.navy.mil/downloads/hp/news604.pdf>