

ABSTRACT

Risk Factors Associated with STD Infection Among Adults in St Catherine, Jamaica

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This retrospective study was conducted at the St Jago Park Health Centre in Spanish Town, St Catherine, Jamaica. The study sought to identify the risk factors associated with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). By systematic random sampling, two patient groups of 60 persons each, were selected. One from the STD clinic of patients diagnosed and being treated for an STD. The other group was selected from the Medical clinic.

Results revealed that whilst the study clients had a sound knowledge about STDs, there was a dichotomy between respondents' knowledge and their sexual behaviour. Sex with multiple partners was reported as the most frequent sexual practice indulged in by the STD group as well as the comparison group. The prevalence of condom use among the groups was low, although the STD group felt

threatened by having an STD. Their perceptions of the greatest sexual risk they had ever experienced, as well as the barriers to the practice of safer sex were reported.

Analysis of the social indices revealed that persons in a common-law/visiting relationship had a tendency to become STD positive. Those living alone or who were not living with their children had a similar tendency to the disease. The strategy of social marketing to promote the condom and create a demand for its use is recommended.