

Health and "hookups" correlated in first-year college women

15 January 2014

Provided by Taylor & Francis

Sexual experimentation outside of committed romantic relationships, or "hooking up," is typically portrayed by the media as unhealthy, especially for young women. These portrayals, however, are largely conjecture. Researchers from Syracuse and Brown Universities set out to examine the relationship between young women's health and hooking up more closely; their findings, in "Sexual Hookups and Adverse Health Outcomes: A Longitudinal Study of First-Year College Women," are now available in *The Journal of Sex Research*, the official publication of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality and a publication from Routledge.

The study examined the associations between sexual hookup behavior and depression, [sexual victimization](#), and [sexually transmitted infections](#). 483 first-year female undergraduate students completed 13 monthly surveys assessing hookup versus romantic sexual behaviors in relation to depression, sexual victimization, as well as self-reported and biologically-confirmed STIs.

Researchers found that early college hookup behavior was associated with sexual victimization and depression, but did not predict future depression. Hookup sex and romantic sex were both associated with STIs, and pre-college hookup behavior predicted early college experiences of sexual victimization. Overall, the potential negative outcomes associated with hooking up in female college students suggest a need for proactive educational efforts and further research into the nature of these associations.

More information: "Sexual Hookups and Adverse Health Outcomes: A Longitudinal Study of First-Year College Women." Robyn L. Fielder, Jennifer L. Walsh, Kate B. Carey, Michael P. Carey. *Journal of Sex Research*. Published online: 18 Dec 2013. [DOI: 10.1080/00224499.2013.848255](#)

APA citation: Health and "hookups" correlated in first-year college women (2014, January 15) retrieved 27 April 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-01-health-hookups-first-year-college-women.html>

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