

Use and knowledge of contraceptive methods by patients in two substance abuse treatment centers in Paris

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Background

International studies on contraceptive use by patients with substance use disorders show a low use of contraception. They focus on the most precarious fraction of patients, mainly users of opiates with high-risk drug use and sexual behaviors and those not currently enrolled with treatment centers [1]. They are not easily applicable to all patients of substance abuse treatment centers.

- **Main objective** : describe the use of contraceptive methods of patients aged 18 to 54 followed in substance abuse treatment centers in Paris.
- **Secondary objectives** : describe patients' knowledge of contraceptive methods and assess the rate of abortion.

Characteristics of patients

- 78 respondents (5-10% of total visitors)
 - 69% Espace Murger, 31% Centre Cassini
 - 48% women and 52% men
 - Mean age 40.7 years
 - 74% have general practitioner
 - 30% have children
 - Substance use :
 - 44% opiate
 - 31% alcohol,
 - 21% prescribed drugs
 - 19% cannabis
 - 18% cocaine
 - 8% crack
 - 10% tobacco
 - 5% Behavioral addiction
- 53 patients with at least one partner in the last 6 months and unsterilized
 - 71% with regular partner
 - 37% with casual partners

Methods

- Population : French-speaking and literate patients aged 18 to 54 years, in medical visit or heroin maintenance treatment delivery.
- In two generalist substance abuse treatment centers in parisian hospitals : *Espace Murger* (F. Widal) and *Centre Cassini* (Cochin).
- An anonymous self-report questionnaire was distributed by the reception staff during five weeks between February and March 2016.
- It explored different contraceptive methods, medical abortion, unplanned pregnancy and emergency contraception.
- The data was analyzed with the R program.

Results

- **Contraception use** :
 - **55.3% always** (26)
 - 19.1% sometimes (9)
 - **25.5% never** (12)
- **Contraceptive methods use currently**:
 - **39.6% male condom alone** (21)
 - 13.2% hormonal pill (7)
 - 5.7% intrauterin device (3)
- **Contraceptive methods use previously** :
 - **89.2% male condom** (66)
 - **63.5% hormonal pill** (47)
 - 35.1% withdrawal (26)
 - 18.9% intrauterine device (14)
- **Knowledge of contraceptive methods** :
 - 98.6% male condom (72)
 - 93.2% hormonal pills (68), including 18.4% insufficiently
 - 79.4% intrauterine device (54), including 29.4% insufficiently
 - 55.5% implant (40), including 20.8% insufficiently
 - 35.6% injection (26), including 21.9% insufficiently
- 89.0% knew the emergency contraception. 37.5% have used it.
- **35,6% ever confronted with an unplanned pregnancy** (26)
- **41,1% had a medical abortion** (30)
- 12,3% reported abortion but no unplanned pregnancy (9)

Conclusion

- Use of contraceptive methods is not as low as previously observed in other populations of substance users, but it is lower than general population's [1-3].
- This may reflect the combined severity of the SUD as well as high access to medical and social care for patients attending this type of free clinics.
- Knowledge of contraceptive methods is common [4].
- Male condom is the dominant method, yet it is not best effective contraceptive method in practice [5].
- Use of intrauterin device is low, in this population with a mean age of 41 years [2].
- It is necessary to continue questioning individually the contraceptive choices and the influence of the desire to be a parent on addiction care pathway [6].

References

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