Condom Use Patterns

Another major recent change in French contraceptive practices has involved condom use. In 1994, condoms were used by 8% of women aged 20–44, up from 5% in 1988 (Table 3). In both 1988 and 1978, condom use as a primary contraceptive method was about the same in all age groups, at around 5%. Condoms were mostly used as a short-term method during this period, while women took a break from the pill or before they adopted a medical contraceptive method. In France, the first AIDS prevention campaigns were launched in 1988. The recent increase in condom popularity has involved mostly people younger than 30. In 1994, 53% of women aged 25–29 and 58% of women aged 20–24 had ever used condoms (Table 4). (These proportions represent an increase from 38% and 23%, respectively, in 1988.) The percentage of women older than 30 who had ever used condoms remained stable, at around 42%.

The 1994 FFS revealed that 83% of men aged 20–24 had ever used condoms, compared with about 57% between the ages of 30 and 39. According to a survey on sexual behavior in France conducted in late 1991, 40% of women aged 20–24 reported ever having used condoms; this percentage falls between the level of 23% reported in 1988 and that of 58% reported in 1994. The percentage of men and women aged 30 and older who reported ever using condoms in 1994 was nearly constant with age, at around 40% for women and 50–60% for men. The recent increase in condom use occurred mainly among men and women born after 1965, and seems to have been as large between 1992 and 1993 as between 1988 and 1991.

The 1991 survey also revealed that con-