Influence of men’s concerns. Among young men, negative perceptions about pregnancy moderated the relationship between perceptions about STD risk and condom use. Among young men who perceived pregnancy to be less negative, those who used condoms had perceptions of higher STD risk; those who did not use condoms had perceptions of lower STD risk. Among young men who perceived pregnancy to be more negative, there was no difference between perceptions of STD risk and condom use.

Another way to examine this interaction is to dichotomize both perceptions of STD risk and perceptions of pregnancy, and look at condom use in each of the four groups. Among young men who reacted less negatively to the idea of their partner’s becoming pregnant, 46% of those who perceived their risk of acquiring an STD to be low used condoms, compared with 68% of those who perceived their risk to be high, suggesting that STD risk drives condom use for those whose pregnancy concerns are relatively low. By contrast, among men who reacted more negatively to the idea of their partner’s becoming pregnant, the proportions who used condoms did not differ significantly according to perceived risk of STDs—65% who perceived themselves to be at low risk of STDs and 70% of those who perceived themselves to be at high risk used condoms.

Use with Casual Partners

In bivariate analyses, female and male adolescents’ condom use and hormonal contraceptive use with casual partners were not related. For young men, age was the only characteristic associated with condom use. Condom users were younger than nonusers (17 vs. 18 years, on average). There were no differences by age for females. Age was added as a control variable in the logistic regression.

In contrast to the results for main partners, with casual partners, adolescents’ hormonal contraceptive use was not