

**Effect of prospectively-measured pregnancy intention indicators on the consistency of contraceptive use among young women in the US**C. Moreau<sup>1,2</sup>, J. Trussell<sup>2</sup>, K. Hall<sup>2</sup>, J. Barber<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup>Inserm, Le Kremlin Bicetre, France, <sup>2</sup>Princeton University, Princeton, USA, <sup>3</sup>University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA

**Introduction:** Pregnancy intendedness is commonly used as an indicator of how well individuals achieve their reproductive goals. In the US, only 20% reporting their pregnancy as intended. These measures are based on retrospective accounts of pregnancy intentions which may not reflect intentions at the time women became pregnant. Furthermore, the traditional bipolar scheme of intended *versus* unintended fails to recognize that women do not always have explicit plans for reproduction. The aim of this paper is therefore to assess the relation between prospectively measured pregnancy intention and consistency of contraceptive use.

**Methods:** Data are drawn from a cohort study of 1,250 women ages 18-19 years followed for 30 months. Women provided weekly journals via Internet and telephone. Each weekly journal assessed time-varying characteristics of contraceptive use, pregnancy intentions, and sexual and reproductive outcomes. Women were asked on a scale from 0 to 5 (0=not at all, 5=really) how strongly they wanted to avoid becoming pregnant or conversely how much they wanted to become pregnant. They also described their use of contraception from week to week, including consistency of use. We examined 14,505 pairs of journal entries completed during the first 18 months of follow-up for which women reported in the second entry they were not pregnant at last interview and had had intercourse since the last interview. We used a logistic regression with random effects.

**Results:** Overall, 28.3% of women reported inconsistent use of contraception during the last week. Consistent contraceptive use increased from 21% to 77.4% as intentions to become pregnant decreased and pregnancy avoidance increased. Compared to women who scored 0 (did not want to avoid a pregnancy at all), the threshold score for an increased odds of consistent contraceptive use was 5 on the avoidance scale (OR=2.1; CI=1.3-3.6). Women who scored 3 or below on the intention scale were more likely to be consistent contraceptive users than women who scored 5 (OR=3.3 for women who scored 3 as compared to women who scored 5; CI=1.7-6.6). The combination of scores of the avoidance and intention scales shows incoherent responses in 4% of weekly records. The combined pregnancy intention score shows that ambivalent women were less likely to report consistent contraceptive use than others.

**Conclusion:** This study illustrates the importance of examining pregnancy intendedness beyond the bipolar measure of pregnancy intention. We find that intention to become pregnant and to avoid pregnancy independently predict subsequent consistent contraceptive use.