



Alcohol Consumption, Drug, and Condom Use Among STD Clinic Patients



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INTRODUCTION

- Research on the association between substance use and sexual risk behavior has yielded a complex pattern of findings; inconsistent findings may reflect method variance, including factors such as sex of the participant, the nature of the sexual event, the partner characteristics, and the type of substance used.
- The purpose of this study was to investigate the association between substance use and unprotected sex independently for alcohol, drugs, or combined substance use among STD clinic patients; and to examine partner characteristics as a moderator of this association.

METHOD

Participants:

- N = 1,419 STI clinic patients
- 48% female
- 64% African-American
- M age = 29 years

Measures:

- Most recent sexual experience:
 - partner type (primary, outside)
 - when last event occurred
 - type of sex (vaginal or anal)
 - condom use
 - alcohol use, number of drinks
 - drug use
 - partner alcohol or drug use
- Demographics

Statistical Analyses:

- Logistic regression was used to examine the association between substance use (alcohol, drugs, and combined use) and condom use using three separate models.
- Substance use and partner type were included as main effects as well as the interaction between substance use and partner type.
- Exploratory analyses examined the association between substance use and condom use when both partners, one partner, or no partners were using substances prior to the sexual event.

RESULTS

Event-Level Analyses

- For both men and women, the odds of condom use was not associated with substance use (alcohol, drug, or combined use). The odds of condom use increased when men or women had sex with a non-primary versus primary partner (adjusted OR = 2.06 to 2.47, $ps < .001$).
- For women (but not for men), alcohol consumption interacted with partner type (adjusted OR = 0.21, 95% CI = 0.07, 0.60).

- Women were less likely to use a condom with non-primary partners when drinking versus when no alcohol was consumed; no differences were found in the proportion of women using condoms when drinking versus no alcohol use (see figure 1).

Participant & Partner Substance Use

- For men, no significant interactions between participant-partner substance use (alcohol, drugs, or combined use) and partner type.
- For women, both participant and partner alcohol consumption (but not drug or combined substance use) interacted with partner type (adjusted OR = 0.16, 95% CI = 0.05, 0.56). Women who reported that they and their non-primary partners were drinking prior to sex were less likely to use a condom (see figure 2).

Figure 1 ■ No Alcohol ■ Alcohol

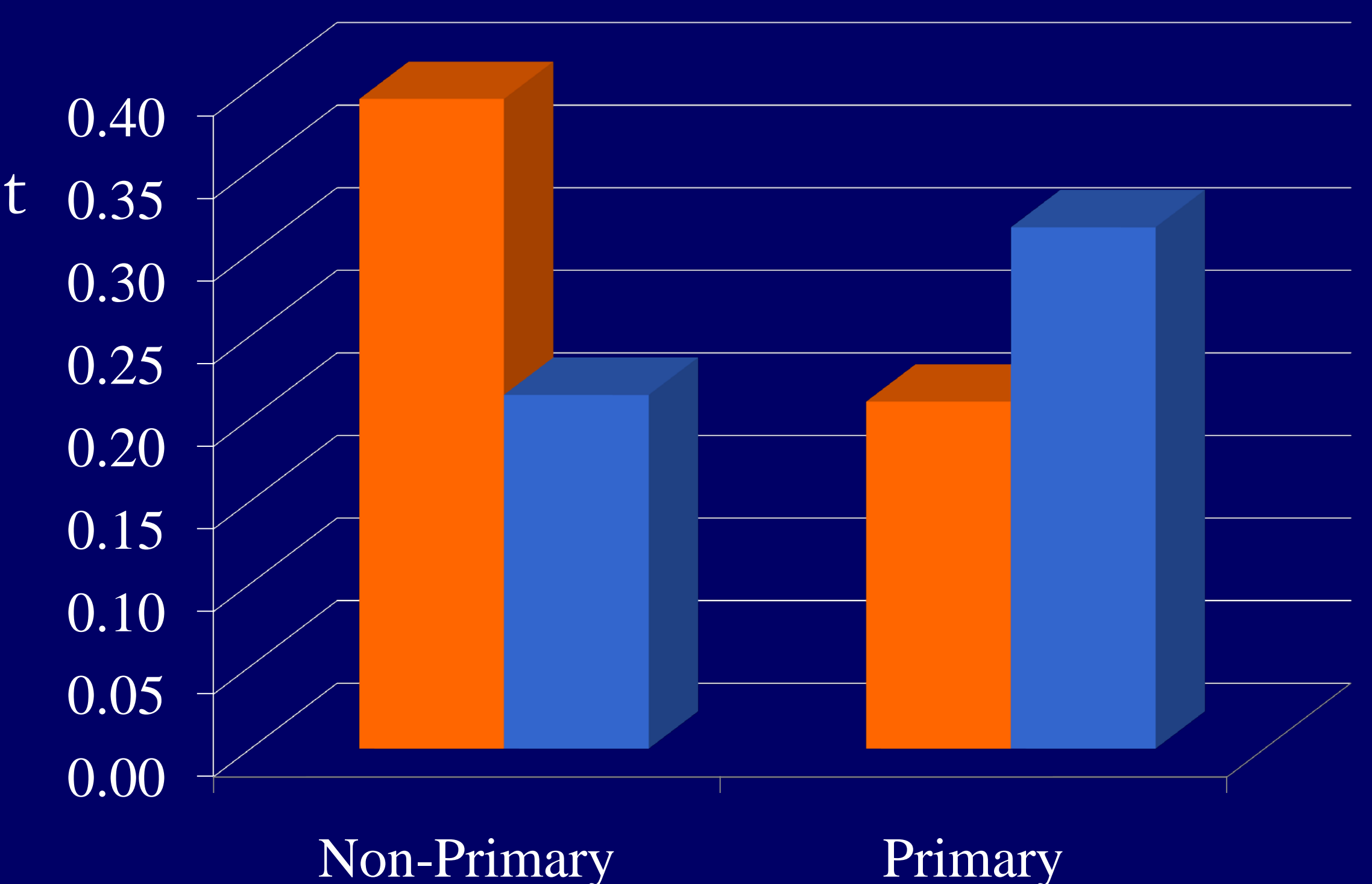
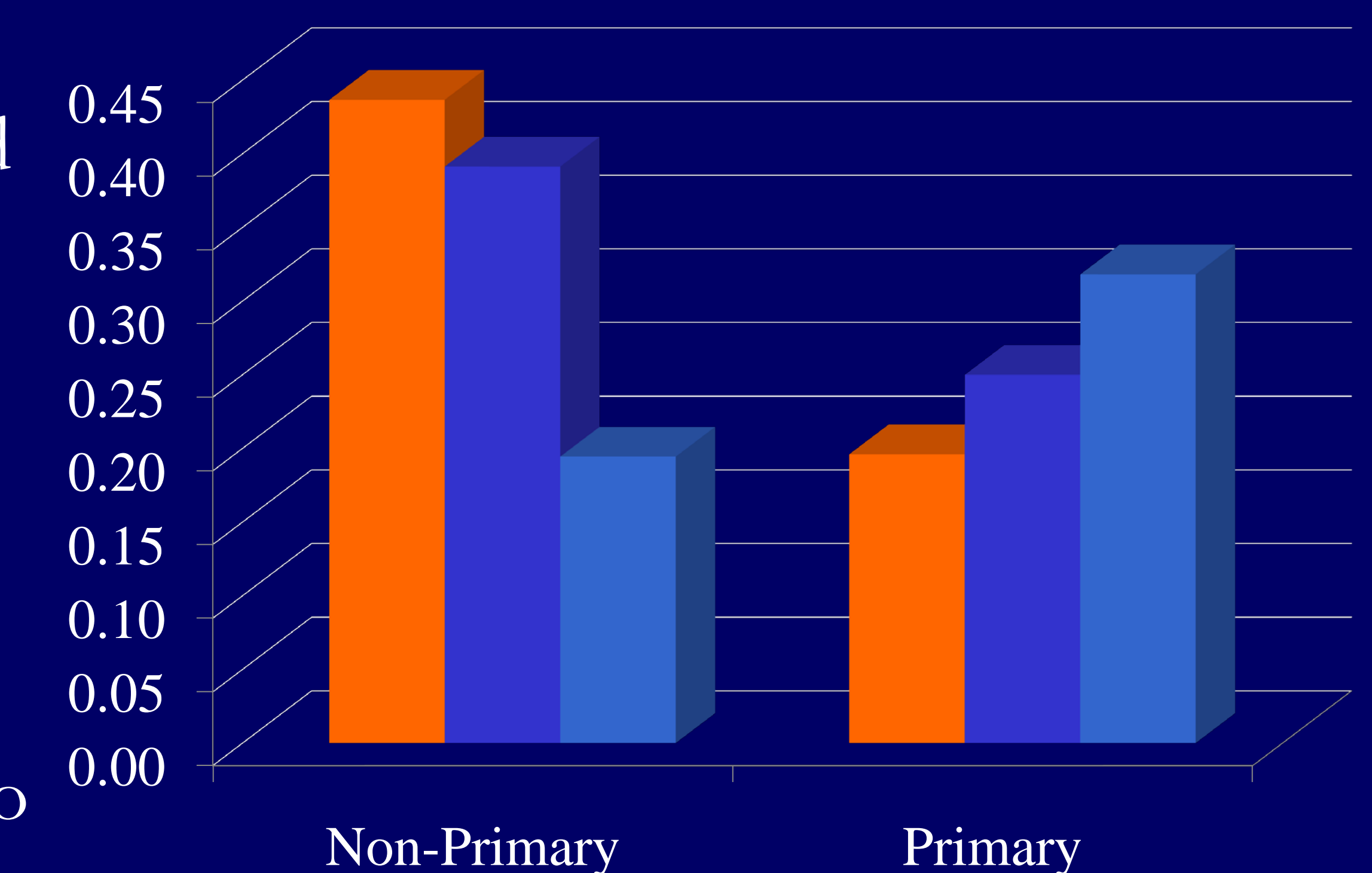


Figure 2 ■ None ■ One ■ Both



CONCLUSIONS

- Alcohol consumption among STD clinic patients is associated with condom use, but this association differs by gender and partner characteristics. Exploratory analyses indicated that when a woman and her non-primary partner were drinking concurrent with sex, they were less likely to use condoms during sex.
- These findings suggest that risk reduction strategies for women should address the important role of alcohol use, especially in the context of non-primary partnerships.

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