



THE UNIVERSITY OF
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The Love Bug Survey 2.0

A Comparison Between Two Universities

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Abstract

Background: *Chlamydia trachomatis* is the most commonly notified bacterial sexually transmitted infection in developed countries. Most of the chlamydia infections are asymptomatic. Left untreated, chlamydia can result serious long-term health consequences such as pelvic inflammatory disease and infertility in women. Fortunately, the infection is easy to test and treat. Therefore identifying and testing asymptomatic people is important to avoid the long-term sequelae, and reduce onward transmission to sexual partners. Some countries like England and Australia have acknowledged the public health concern caused by chlamydia and are trying to increase the testing rate of young people. One innovative proposal was to improve access to chlamydia screening by piloting issue of chlamydia tests from community pharmacies. Last year, Haag et al. explored the knowledge of chlamydia and asked students of the University of Western Australia (UWA) about facilitators and barriers to get a pharmacy-based chlamydia test. To date, there is very little published about chlamydia prevalence and methods to increase testing in Switzerland. In addition, nothing has been published about chlamydia knowledge and the facilitators or barriers that may influence Swiss students to get a chlamydia test in a pharmacy.

Objectives: The primary objective was to survey chlamydia knowledge and facilitators and barriers to pharmacy-based chlamydia testing in students from the University of Basel. The second objective was to compare the results from the UWA students with the Basel students to see if there are any differences.

Methods: The Australian survey was translated into German. The survey included questions about student demographics, chlamydia knowledge, the willingness to get a pharmacy-based chlamydia test and about the facilitators and barriers to get such a test. The survey was created with the online survey software Qualtrics. A link was distributed by different means to reach the students. The results were analysed using SPSS and compared with the data from Australia.

Results: 75% of 991 questioned students of the University of Basel would consider a pharmacy-based chlamydia test. 'No need for an appointment' and 'A pharmacy is easy to access' were the two main facilitators. 'Lack of privacy' and 'I do not visit a pharmacy regularly' were the main barriers. 90% of the surveyed students from the University of Basel were sexually active, but they were less frequently tested for chlamydia during the last year ($p < 0.001$) than the students from the University of Western Australia. Of the students that had a previous chlamydia test, a significantly higher chlamydia positive rate was found in the Basel students (20.4%) compared to the UWA students (5.6%) ($p < 0.001$). The students of Basel had significantly less knowledge compared to the students from the UWA ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: There is significantly less knowledge among the Swiss students compared to the Australian ones. Three quarters of the questioned students at both Universities indicated that they would get a chlamydia test from the pharmacy. In the future it is important to increase the awareness and knowledge about chlamydia infections in Swiss students and give them more opportunities to get tested.