

Thesis Title            Self Care among Sexually Transmitted Disease  
Patients prior to Receiving the Services at  
Public Venereal Disease Clinic

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#### ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate self care among STD patients receiving the services at public venereal disease clinic through the following aspects: preventive behavior, in particular, condom use and illness behavior. The investigation concerned factors affecting these behaviors. Data was collected by interviewing during March and May, 1991 from samples of 40 men and 38 women at a public VD clinic in the province considered an epidemic area of STDs and AIDS.

The results of this study showed that few of patients always used condoms even most of them knew that condoms protected against STDs and AIDS. There were many factors influencing their behaviors. One factor concurred that condoms were unavailable to males while they visited prostitutes, they also stated sensation

were greatly reduced. Sometimes there wasn't any feelings and it was painful for them, thereby, interrupting intercourse..

It is believed that it would be safer for them to select other preferances without using condoms, such as women who were not prostitutes, visiting the places that prostitutes always went for a regular check-up, etc.

Some of them typically perceived their illness as the result of fate, chance or had attitude towards condoms that should be used only with prostitutes expecially by married men.

Furthermore, some patients reported that sexual behaviors increased when under the influence of alochol. Once inebriated they would not likely use condoms even if they had some with them.

Among women, there were only two of them sometimes used condoms for contraception and disease prevention, and that use depended on their husbands. If the husband disliked using them, the wife couldn't use this alternative to contraception nor prevention.

The illness behavior found in this study is that not all of the patients defined symptoms as STDs. Some of them went to the VD clinic because of having genital problems. The definition differed according to diversity, genital or non-genital area, previous experience, sex behavior and opinions from lay persons. In women they couldn't define symptoms as STDs if their husbands refused to visit any prostitutes. The initial perception of a symptom didn't

always suggest a treatment decision. Some patients hadn't defined it as STDs tended to continue sexual activity because they weren't aware until they had more signs or were deemed by lay persons.

From study of the health-seeking behavior, it indicated that most of the patients or social network had belief in the services of public VD clinic. However, the clinic was one of two places in the province and a manner of the services made many patients unable to obtain all over while other health services were more accessible. For that reason, the most popular self care among them was self-medication. When this couldn't solved their problems, then they went to the VD clinic.

These results revealed that promotion of condom use in men for both contraception and disease prevention would affect usage by women and the promotion is essential when thinking in terms of availability, the quality of the condoms, expiration date, correct size, thickness, thinness, lubrication or non lubrication and so on. Even condoms are given out free to win user acceptance. More information about STDs, HIV/AIDS is needed to determine condom effectiveness and the risk factors involved. Last but not least health education, in relationship to STDs with emphasis on simple knowledge about initial symptoms, appropriate actions together with preventive promotion are of extreme importance and readjustment of services for the treatment of STDs, consideration should be geared to control these diseases.