

Use of drinking protective behavioral strategies in association to sex-related alcohol negative consequences: The mediating role of alcohol consumption

Author(s)

Lewis MA, Rees M, Logan DE et al.

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Abstract

Alcohol use has been implicated as a risk factor for sexual negative consequences, such as unprotected sexual intercourse. The present research was conducted to examine the relationship between drinking protective behavioral strategies and consensual sex-related alcohol negative consequences, and whether this relationship varied by gender. Additionally, typical number of drinks during sexual behavior was evaluated as a potential mediator of this association. Heavy drinking, sexually active college students (N = 297, 50.2% women) completed self-report measures of drinking protective behavioral strategies, alcohol consumption, and sex-related alcohol negative consequences. Findings indicated that women who used drinking protective behavioral strategies more frequently were less likely to experience sex-related alcohol negative consequences whereas this relationship was not significant for men. For women, this relationship was mediated by the typical number of drinks consumed during sexual behavior. The current research demonstrates that use of drinking protective behavioral strategies is related to a reduction in women's sex-related risks when drinking. Findings are discussed in terms of alcohol myopia theory. Implications for interventions aimed to reduce higher risk sexual behavior among college students are discussed.

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