

## Risk Behaviors for Sexual and Reproductive Health Among Female University Students in Albania: A National Survey

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### Abstract

Risky sexual behaviors among youth pose significant public health concerns, contributing to the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), unintended pregnancies, and unsafe abortions. This national study examines the prevalence of such behaviors among female university students in Albania to inform health policies and interventions. The study, supported by the National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation, was conducted from October to December 2024 across public and private universities, surveying 5,966 female students using an online questionnaire. Results revealed that 47.2% of participants were sexually active, with 61.7% initiating sex between ages 12 and 18. Nearly half (48.6%) reported never using condoms, while 32.7% used them occasionally. Additionally, 17.6% had multiple sexual partners, and 70.6% did not use a condom during their most recent sexual encounter. Despite these risky behaviors, 79.7% of participants had never been tested for STIs, and 88.1% had never been tested for HIV. The findings highlight the need for comprehensive sexual health education and interventions promoting safer sexual practices and regular testing for STIs and HIV among university students.

### Keywords

Risky sexual behaviors, sexual health, female university students, STIs, Albania.