Childhood Physical Neglect and STI Risk in Young Adulthood
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Introduction
- Risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is one of the many negative health outcomes reportedly associated with a history of childhood maltreatment.
- While most studies have focused on childhood abuse, there is a growing body of research on childhood neglect, especially physical neglect.
- Physical neglect is the most common form of maltreatment.
- Early and chronic childhood neglect has unique adverse effects during childhood and adolescence, including increased social deficits and more chronic health issues. However, the research exists on a long-term outcome was limited.

Methods
- Data: National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, a nationally representative probability sample of adolescents in grades 7 through 12 in the 1995 school year.
- Analytic sample: 10,086 respondents from the 7th and 8th grades.
- Dependent variable: STI status (Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Trichomoniasis) in young adulthood (ages 18-26, measured via:
- 2) Assay reported diagnosis in the past 12 months
- 3) Self-reported diagnosis in the past 12 months

Odds ratios for self-reported STIs by maltreatment type, among females (n=5,436)

Odds ratios for self-reported STIs by maltreatment type, among males (n=4,623)

Research Questions
- What are the associations between childhood neglect and both self-reported and assay-identified STIs in young adulthood?
- Are these associations similar to those seen between childhood abuse (physical and sexual) and STIs?
- Do these associations between neglect and STI status vary by race/ethnicity and biological sex?

Results

Conclusion
- Previous analyses rely on self-reported STIs, which are less accurate compared to assay-identified STIs. Our study has shown that childhood neglect and supervision neglect are associated with increased odds of STIs in young adulthood.

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