

Public Abstract

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Young adults in the United States have higher rates of STDs than young adults in other industrialized nations. This could be a result of inaccurate or insufficient information. This study examined the coverage of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in the bestselling undergraduate human sexuality textbooks (n = 14). A codebook was developed and concepts about the types, incidence, transmission, symptoms, treatment, health impact and prevention of STDs, as well as the amount and accuracy of that information were coded. In general, textbooks included the most information about prevention and symptoms, and were most accurate in their coverage of HIV, hepatitis B, genital herpes, and pubic lice. In addition, textbooks included more information on HIV, syphilis, and gonorrhea than other STDs. Suggestions to textbook authors and directions for future research are discussed.