



## News Release

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### **PUBLIC AND NETWORKS GETTING COMFORTABLE WITH CONDOM ADVERTISING ON TV**

#### ***New Studies Find Nearly Three out of Four Americans Favor Allowing Condom Ads on TV; Condom Ads Don't Turn Viewers Off to Shows, Networks, or Other Ads***

NEW YORK, NY – New studies show that condom advertising, banned for many years on network television, is acceptable to most Americans today and does not negatively affect viewers' attitudes toward networks, programming, or other ads. Three of the six major broadcast networks now allow paid condom advertising, although they restrict the time of day when condom ads can air and limit their message and tone. The studies were part of a series of reports on paid condom advertising released here today by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

A new national Kaiser Family Foundation survey of 1,142 adults finds that 71% of Americans favor allowing condoms ads on TV, with 37% saying such ads should be allowed to air at any time, and 34% saying only at certain times, such as after 10 p.m. One in four adults (25%) say condom ads should not be allowed on TV at all. Americans aged 18 to 49 are significantly more likely than those 50 and older to support condom advertising. Among adults under age 50, 82% say condom ads should be allowed, compared to 60% of those 50 and older. According to the survey, more people oppose beer advertising on TV (34%) than condom advertising (25%).

A "dial test" conducted by the Foundation – similar to those used by networks to try out new TV shows – finds that most viewers do not object to seeing a condom ad in regular TV programming. Using a scale of 0 (very negative reaction) to 100 (very positive), viewers gave an ad for Trojan condoms an average score of 52, similar to other ads viewed in the experiment: Allegra (allergy drug), 50; Victoria's Secret, 51; Toyota Camry, 52; Juno (internet service), 52; Sears, 51; and Honda Civic, 55. This research also indicates that condom ads have no negative impact on viewers' assessments of the show or network on which they air, or of the products advertised after a condom ad.

"This research indicates that long-held concerns at some networks about the impact of condom ads may be outdated," said Victoria Rideout, Vice President and Director of the Program for the Study of the Entertainment Media and Health at the Kaiser Family Foundation. "Adults favor condom advertising by a margin of nearly three to one, and – even for viewers who object to them -- seeing a condom ad while watching TV doesn't change how they feel about networks, particular shows, or the other advertisers."

Ten years ago, no broadcast television network would air a paid condom commercial. Today, three of the six major broadcast networks allow condom companies to advertise on their airwaves, with some limitations on message, tone, and time of day. Fox began accepting condom ads in 1991, CBS in 1998, and NBC in 1999. ABC, UPN, and The WB continue to prohibit paid condom ads. ABC airs ads for prescription birth control pills, and The WB says it would consider ads for the pill as well. UPN and The WB do not broadcast network programming after 10 p.m. Several cable companies have allowed condom advertising for years, and some broadcasters that restrict paid condom ads accept public service ads referencing condoms or safer sex.

The reports issued today by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation include:

- ***Changing Standards: Condom Advertising on American Television*** (Pub # 3139), a history of network policies toward condom advertising, written for the Foundation by advertising reporter Michael Wilke, and published today as a Special Report to the Kaiser Daily Reproductive Health Report ([www.kaisernetwork.org/dailyreports/condomads](http://www.kaisernetwork.org/dailyreports/condomads)).
- ***Condom Ads on Television: Unwrapping the Controversy*** (Pub #3125), a report on a ‘dial test’ study of viewer responses to condom advertising. The study included 175 viewers who watched a TV show and several ads and indicated their reactions via a hand-held dial. Approximately half of the viewers watched programming that included a condom commercial while the other half did not. The study was designed and analyzed by Foundation staff and researchers at the Social Policy Research Institute (SPRI), and was conducted by SPRI.
- ***A Survey Snapshot: Condom Advertising on Television*** (Pub #3127), a national public opinion survey of 1,142 adults. The survey was designed and analyzed by Foundation staff with fieldwork conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates from April 16-22, 2001.

Additional copies of this press release (Pub #3142) and the reports listed above are available for free online at [www.kff.org](http://www.kff.org), or by calling the Kaiser Family Foundation’s publication request line at 1-800-656-4533.

*The Kaiser Family Foundation is an independent, national health philanthropy dedicated to providing information and analysis on health issues to policymakers, the media, and the general public. The Foundation is not associated with Kaiser Permanente or Kaiser Industries.*

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