

Perceived HIV/AIDS Prevalence, Burden, and Risk, Cape Town, South Africa

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Objectives: To examine perceived HIV prevalence and disease burden in high-risk adults in Cape Town, South Africa. **Methods:** A convenience sample of 793 male and 188 female sexually transmitted infection clinic patients completed anonymous surveys. **Results:** Individuals who saw themselves at greater risk for HIV/AIDS also perceived greater local HIV prevalence. Participants presented extremely distorted views of local HIV preva-

lence that exceed the reality in Cape Town. Perceiving greater local AIDS burden was independently associated with condom use. **Conclusions:** Interventions that accurately place local AIDS burden in the context of places with relatively lower burden may activate protective motivations.

Key words: Intuitive epidemiology, perceived prevalence, HIV risk, AIDS behavior

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