Title of Paper/Presentation: Nonmedical Use of Sedatives among Adult Latinas in United States

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(a) Background: Nonmedical use of prescribed drugs is defined as use of medication without prescription, or when one uses medication solely for feelings or experience caused by the drug (SAMHSA, 2009). Nonmedical prescription drug use across the U.S. has substantially increased among adolescents and young adults in the past decade (SAMHSA, 2009). The prevalence of nonmedical prescription drug use is now greater than the prevalence of illicit drug use, other than marijuana (SAMHSA, 2009). The importance of studying non-medical use of prescribed medications among Latinos is evident when one considers the increasing growth of this population in the U.S. This study examines nonmedical use of prescription sedatives, tranquilizers, and hypnotics (hereafter sedatives) among a community based sample of adult Latina mother-daughter dyads.

(b) Method: Participants were 316 Latina women (158 mothers and 158 daughters) enrolled in a study of intergenerational transmission of drug abuse and HIV/AIDS risk behaviors between Latina mothers and daughters in Miami, Florida. Assessments were conducted in Spanish (65%) or English (35%). Female interviewers administered a questionnaire containing all study variables: age; education; income; time in the U.S.; language proficiency/preference; health insurance status; alcohol use; drug use; and nonmedical use of sedatives– 12 months prior to assessment; chronic medical problems, general health status and wellness were also measured.

(c) Results: Sedatives were used by 20.9 % of the participants. Mothers reported more sedative use than daughters (b = -.62, p = .01). Higher frequencies of beer drinking was associated with more sedative use (b = .16, p=.01). Participants indicating better health (b = -.46, p < .0001) and wellness (b = -.04, p=.02) reported less sedative use.

(d) Conclusions: These results improve our understanding of risk factors for non-prescribed sedative use among adult Latinas. Findings from the current study can inform psychological and drug abuse treatment services for adult Latinas.