

Dear Friends,

How young people decide to act sexually shapes their long term physical health and emotional happiness. This week we highlight new studies on premarital sexual intercourse and marital stability, on the benefits of marriage for heart attack victims, and on relationship satisfaction.

NEW RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



Premarital Sex and Marital Stability

Women with 0-1 premarital sexual partners divorce less frequently than those with more sexual partners. Nicholas Wolfinger's [analysis of recent sexual trends](#) takes a closer look at the nuances of these trends. For example, women who have had *10 or more* sexual partners before marriage has increased from 2% to 8% since the 1970's.



Marriage Improves Chances of Surviving a Heart Attack

Married individuals survive heart attacks more frequently and spend less time in the hospital than do divorced or never married people. The complete British study is available [here](#) and well translated for the layman in the [Guardian](#).



Relationship Satisfaction Is Influenced by the Mating Pool

Daniel Conroy-Beam of the University of Texas at Austin has a [fascinating study](#) on the influence of the “mating pool” on the level of satisfaction with one's partner. Those with partners more desirable than themselves were satisfied whether or not their partners matched their ideal preferences. The researchers also conclude that mate-preference-fulfillment is not critical to relationship satisfaction, giving social science backing to [Tolkien's observation](#) that your soul mate is the one you have not the one with characteristics that you might desire more.

MARRIPEDIA ENTRIES RELATED TO THESE FINDINGS

- 1) [“Marriage and Religious Faithfulness”](#)
- 2) [“Effects of Marriage on Physical Health”](#)

With an eye to the future,

Pat Fagan

Director of the Marriage and Religion Research Institute (MARRI)