Reviewer’s report

Title: Predictors of incident herpes simplex virus type 2 infections in young women at risk for unintended pregnancy in San Francisco

Version: 2 Date: 24 June 2007

Reviewer: Christopher K Fairley

Reviewer’s report:

General
This is a well written and clearly presented paper. I've suggested some things for the editors and authors to consider.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached).

1. Given the uncertainty over HSV serology and its critical importance (i.e. it is the outcome measure here) the paper may be improved by more than just a few words about the sensitivity and specificity of the test. With a low incidence, even a few false positives may be important. In the methods a paragraph should be included that discusses this and also a paragraph in the discussion. Data may also be available about retesting of the same samples or other quality control measures.

2. Odds Ratios and 95% confidence intervals should be included in table one (baseline analysis), not just p values

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. Abstract should include 14% loss to follow up - it is plus for the study and a pity not to include it.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.