
Brazil Launches 120 Million Condom Campaign

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The Brazilian government announced Wednesday it plans to distribute 120 million condoms ahead of the upcoming Carnival celebrations.

"There will be widespread distribution, there are 120 million condoms which will be distributed in all of the 27 states, with particular reinforcements where there will be carnival celebrations, a greater number of young people, but they will be made available in all parts of the country," said health minister Arthur Chioro.

According to Chioro, the mass distribution of condoms will just be part of a multi-pronged effort to promote safe sex ahead of the nationwide Carnival celebrations. Building on successes from previous years, the health ministry said its condom handout program will be backed up by a multimedia campaign to encourage their use. Television and radio adverts will hit the airwaves, while 129,000 posters will be put up in the streets, the ministry announced. Another 315,000 safe sex information packages will be handed out ahead of the Carnival, according to Chioro.

The campaign this year will also have a focus on HIV/AIDS prevention, with testing centers to be set up near party hotspots.

People will be able to take the test in various places, in the Sambadrome (where parades are held), in the street parties, and various centers where people will be celebrating so that people can take it as close to home as possible," Chioro explained.

Around 400,000 people are being treated for AIDS in Brazil, according to government figures.

Officially beginning on February 13, Carnival is Brazil's most iconic festival. The six day celebration brings the country to a standstill every year.
