



NORTHREACH

October 2020

HIV Awareness Newsletter

This month's newsletter will highlight a pivotal step that was recently attained towards expanding HIV prevention choices for women.

Earlier this year, the International Partnership on Microbicides were happy to announce that the European Medicine's Agency has issued a positive opinion on the dapivirine ring for use by women 18 and older as a new option to help reduce their risk of HIV infection.


Although treatment options have had amazing results, HIV is still the leading cause of death for women ages 15-44 worldwide. Out of the 1.5 million new cases of HIV worldwide in 2019, more than one third of them were in women living in sub-Saharan Africa according to UNAIDS. Two large clinical trials of the dapivirine ring concluded that the product reduced the risk of HIV infection by approximately 30% overall in the target population of women aged 18-45 years old living in east and southern Africa.



So, what is this dapivirine ring and how does it work? The dapivirine ring is made of flexible silicone and slowly releases the antiretroviral drug dapivirine once inserted into the vagina. The user can replace the long-acting product herself on a monthly basis. Antiretroviral therapy, when adhered to correctly, can reduce the amount of HIV in the body of someone living with HIV to undetectable levels. And we all know that **undetectable=untransmittable** which is the goal to strive for when dealing with HIV treatment!

What does the positive opinion issued by the European Medicine's Agency regarding the dapivirine ring mean for its future? The positive opinion issued by the EMA will now open the possibility for the World Health Organization to include the dapivirine ring in its guidelines and recommendations for HIV prevention! Furthermore, the WHO in collaboration with the International Partnership for Microbicides, will now be able to seek approval for the ring from African regulatory bodies so it can be distributed in the countries where women face the highest risk for HIV around the world.



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Newsletter information sourced from:

- <http://www.icad-cisd.com/2020/07/statement-dapivirine-ring/>
- <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/vaginal-ring-hiv-prevention-receives-positive-opinion-european-regulator>



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