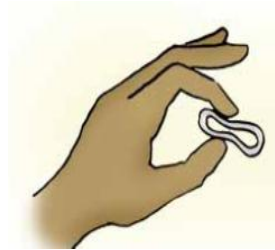


## This letter answers some common questions about the vaginal ring.

### Why test a vaginal ring?

Recent studies have shown promising results for vaginal gels and oral tablets for HIV prevention; however these products are not perfect and are not yet available in the general community. Offering options for HIV prevention is important because each woman may have different needs. Vaginal rings may offer several benefits:

- **Long Acting:** Vaginal rings are inserted and left inside the vagina for a month. This may help women who find it difficult to remember to use a product daily.
- **Ease of Use:** Most women find the ring easy to insert and remove. In previous studies, women experienced minimal side effects from the ring.
- **Privacy:** Vaginal rings will usually be inserted and removed at the clinic. It is rare that product will have to be carried to and from the clinic or inserted at home. Some women may appreciate this increased privacy.



### How does the vaginal ring work?

Some women will receive rings containing study medication called Dapivirine. When the ring is in the vagina, the study medication is slowly released. Other women will be given rings that look exactly the same, but have no study medication. The study medication may help prevent HIV infection, but we do not know if it does. This study is being done to find that out.

### Why are there two types of rings?

The two types of rings are needed in order to find out if the study medication is effective for preventing HIV. All women have an equal chance of being placed into 1 of the 2 groups. Women cannot choose their group. No one will know who has which type of ring until the study ends. At the end of the study, researchers will compare the two groups to see if the ring with study medication was effective for preventing HIV.



### Is the ring difficult to insert and remove?

Most women find the ring easy to insert and remove. Study staff will explain how to use the ring, and can assist women if they have trouble.

### What does the ring feel like when it is inserted?

Although some women are aware of the ring in the vagina, most women do not feel it once it's in place.

### Can the ring get lost inside me?

No. The ring cannot be pushed too far up or get lost inside the body.

### Will the ring dissolve inside me?

No. The ring will not dissolve. For women who receive the ring with study medication, the medication is slowly released but the ring itself does not change.

### Will the ring fall out?

This is not common, but may happen. If women are worried that the ring has slipped out, they can always use their finger to check that it is still inserted. If the ring falls out, it should be rinsed in clean water and may be reinserted.



### Is it safe to leave the ring inserted for a month?

Yes. Previous studies have shown that the ring is safe to leave inserted for a month. If women experience any side effects or have concerns, study staff are available to help them.

### Will women or their partners feel the ring during sex?

Some women and their partners may feel the ring in the vagina during sex. While women or their partners may be able to feel it, it is safe to leave it inserted during sex. Women are encouraged to discuss joining ASPIRE and ring use with their partners.



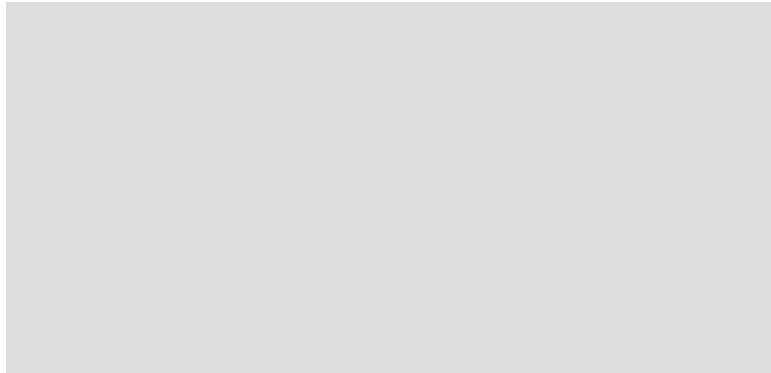
### What if women get pregnant with the ring inserted? Will it hurt their baby?

Women in ASPIRE will receive monthly pregnancy tests. If they become pregnant, they will remove the ring. Researchers don't yet know how Dapivirine might affect a woman's baby, which is why women are asked to use contraception for the duration of the study.

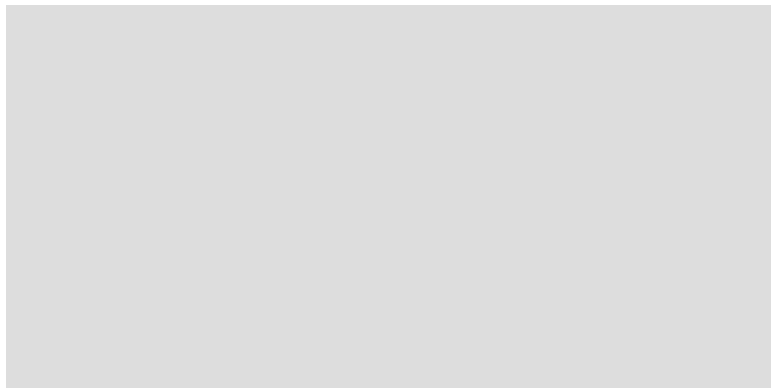
### Is there anything women should avoid while using the ring?

Women should not use other vaginal products when using the ring because this may make it difficult for researchers to learn if the ring helps prevent HIV infection. However, it is okay to use male and female condoms, and tampons.

If you have questions or need more information, please visit the study clinic:



If you have any immediate questions or concerns, you may also contact:



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## Information about Vaginal Rings

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