

This letter gives information about HIV Resistance.

What is resistance?

When a person becomes infected with HIV, HIV virus enters the person's body and begins to make copies of itself.

The medicines used to treat HIV are called antiretrovirals (ARVs). When taken properly, ARVs stop the virus from making copies of itself and help people with HIV to feel better and live longer. Taking ARVs properly usually means taking 3 different ARV medicines, because it takes more than one ARV medicine to stop HIV from making copies of itself.

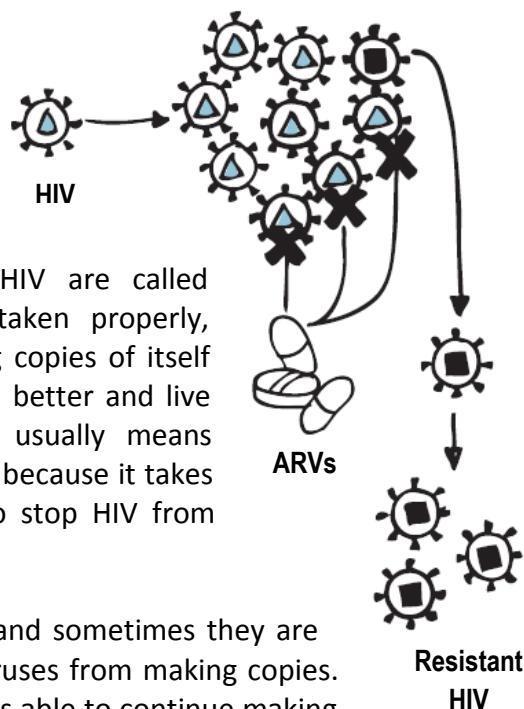
However, ARVs are not perfect, and sometimes they are not able to stop all of the HIV viruses from making copies. When this happens, the HIV that is able to continue making copies of itself is called "resistant".

Why is resistance to ARV medicines a problem?

When resistance happens, the person needs to stop taking the ARV that is no longer working and start taking a different ARV medicine. Because of this, a person who has resistant HIV has fewer choices of ARV medicines that they can take to help them stay well.

Why is resistance to ARV medicines a concern in this research study?

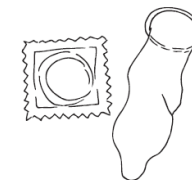
The vaginal ring contains an ARV medicine called Dapivirine. If a woman becomes infected with HIV and keeps using the vaginal ring, the virus in her body could become resistant to Dapivirine and similar ARV medicines used for treating HIV.



How can resistance to ARV medicines be avoided in this research study?

There are three ways to avoid resistance in this research study:

Avoid Getting HIV: Resistance to ARV medicines cannot occur in a person who does not have HIV. Use a condom correctly with every partner, every time you have sex.



Attend Study Visits Every Month: HIV testing will be done monthly. If testing shows that a participant has become infected with HIV, she will immediately stop using the vaginal ring. If study visits are missed, a participant might get HIV, not know it, and keep using the vaginal ring. This could cause resistance to ARV medicines.

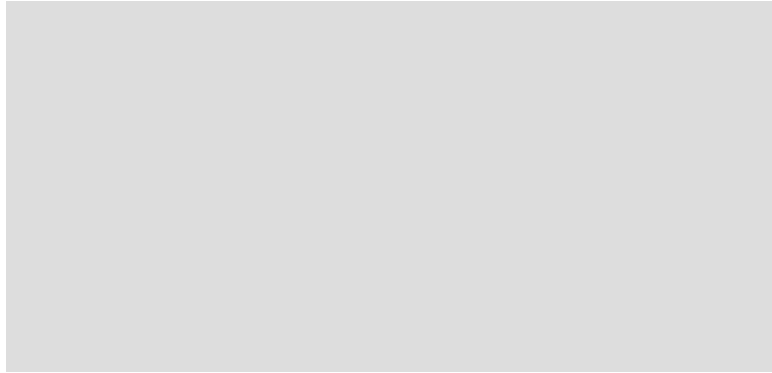
Do Not Share Vaginal Rings: Participants in the research study get health checks and HIV tests every month. People who are not in the study do not get these health checks. These people could have HIV, and not know it. If these people use the vaginal ring, this could cause resistance to ARV medicines.

The study staff are here to help.

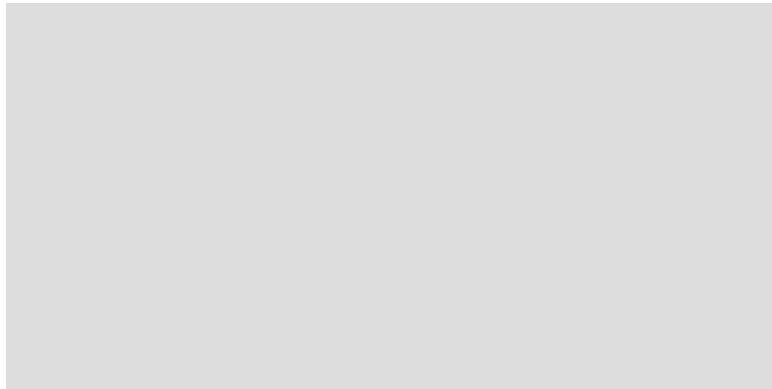
Study staff are available to inform and counsel study participants, their partners, and other community members about resistance and any questions or concerns they may have.



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:



Information about HIV Resistance

