

# But what about...?

Key questions about the ring and PrEP in  
adolescent girls and young women

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Meeting the HIV Prevention Needs of Adolescent Girls  
and Young Women

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# Women need options

**“Available” Now**



**Oral PrEP**

**Available 2019?**



**Vaginal ring**

**Results 2022?**



**Injectable**

**Results 2021?**



**Vaccine**

- PrEP is not a single solution, nor is it for everyone
- No product can protect against HIV if it is not used
- A product that best suits one's lifestyle and needs is more likely to be used
- Just as women have choices in contraception, they need choices for HIV prevention, too



# What we know about PrEP and the ring



- PrEP is approved for those 18 and older in several countries-Kenya is among the most progressive
- The dapivirine ring could be approved in the near future
- Regulatory approvals are based on results of large (Phase III) trials explicitly designed to determine safety and effectiveness
  - Participants are randomly assigned to use either a placebo (with no active drug) or the product with active drug
  - No one knows who is in which group during the study
- PrEP and ring trials had similar results:
  - Both approaches were safe
  - Both effective with **consistent use** – monthly for the ring, daily for PrEP
  - **Not effective in younger women** – ages 18-25 – who did not use the products

# We've had longer to learn more about PrEP

	 <p><b>Truvada as daily PrEP</b></p>	 <p><b>Monthly Dapivirine</b></p>
Phase III Trials	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>
Open-Label Studies (with no placebo)	<b>20+</b>	<b>2 (ongoing)</b>
How effective with consistent use?	<b>Very (more than 90%)</b>	<b>Don't know yet (at least 50% or more)</b>
Where drug goes	<b>Drug goes throughout body – must monitor potential effects</b>	<b>Drug delivered into vagina - little goes elsewhere</b>
Challenges	<b>Daily pill-taking can be difficult; stigma of HIV meds</b>	<b>Vaginal rings unfamiliar; takes time to get used to</b>
Approval Status	<b>Approved in many countries, including Kenya, but most countries only 18+</b>	<b>Approval Pending – for women 18+</b>

# What do we know about PrEP and the ring in adolescent girls?

- 96 girls in the U.S. ages 15-17 were asked to use a ring for a month at a time for 6 months
  - The dapivirine ring was safe and acceptable, and adherence was very high
  - **What about girls here in Africa?**
- A one-year study of 150 boys and girls ages 15-19 from South Africa found:
  - PrEP was safe but adherence became more difficult as level of support was reduced; adherence did not differ between sexes
  - **What about girls here in Kenya?**



Do we want girls and young women of ALL ages to have access to HIV prevention?

**YES!**

# What we've heard young women say

- Neither the ring nor PrEP (or other methods) will be right for everyone
- Having choice is empowering; gives them control of their health and lives
- The products in REACH are themselves empowering
- It's time we placed our own health above our partner's desires

*Using condoms is not so easy. If you try and negotiate, it's like you're saying you're not being faithful. [The ring and PrEP] would give me ownership. I don't have to tell my partner I'm using them.*

*If he says 'don't use it,' I won't. So, I think we should first deal with women – empower each other.*

# Unanswered Questions

- Will young women be more inclined to use these products...
  - In studies that don't have a placebo?
  - Knowing that previous studies found them safe?
  - Knowing they can only work with consistent use?
- Is one easier to use than the other?
- Do they like one more than the other?  
Or do they not like either?
- What can we do to help them to use these products?
- What about girls younger than 18? How can we ensure they have access to these products?

# Why REACH?



## Unanswered questions about PrEP and the ring in adolescent girls and young women

- Are these approaches safe and acceptable?
- Are they willing to use these products?
- Which one do they prefer?

# Discussion

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