

Acceptability of the diaphragm in Mombasa Kenya: a 6-month prospective study.

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Abstract:

OBJECTIVES: If proven acceptable, safe and effective, the diaphragm could be used as a female-controlled method of preventing both sexually-transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancy. This study's aim was to assess the acceptability and safety of the diaphragm among sexually-active women in Mombasa, Kenya. **METHODS:** We conducted a 6-month prospective study among female sex workers (FSWs), and women attending sexual and reproductive health services. Diaphragm acceptability was assessed using continuation rates and factors associated with acceptability. Safety evaluations included colposcopy findings and incidence of urinary tract infections (UTIs) and STIs. **RESULTS:** Half the 185 participants were FSWs who had less schooling and were less likely to be married than other women. After 6 months, 55% (56/102) of sexually-active women reported having used the diaphragm each sex act during the preceding month. Women liked using the diaphragm (95%, 104/109), and 96% (125/130) reported willingness to continue using it. Colposcopy did not reveal significantly more vaginal or cervical lesions. Use of the diaphragm was not associated with an increase in bacterial vaginosis or UTIs. A pregnancy rate of 12 per 100 women/years was observed. **CONCLUSION:** After 6 months of diaphragm use in this setting, continuation rates were sustained, user satisfaction was high and adverse effects were few.