



IPM: Pioneering HIV prevention options for women

Thirteen years ago, IPM entered the HIV prevention field with a promise and a clear vision to create products that women in developing countries could use to prevent HIV, and protect their sexual and reproductive health. Every step we have taken since then has brought that vision into sharper focus. Today, we are as optimistic about our mission as we have ever been.

The HIV epidemic continues to disproportionately affect women in developing countries, yet they lack practical, self-initiated tools they can and are willing to use. IPM's monthly microbicide ring and other technologies in development could help empower women with discreet and long-acting tools they can use to protect their own health.

Our Progress

Since IPM was founded as a nonprofit organization in 2002, we have leveraged public, philanthropic and private sector resources to spur the development of safe and effective life-saving technologies for women.

IPM builds on partnerships—with governments, foundations, researchers, pharmaceutical companies, policymakers, advocates and communities—to bring scientific ingenuity, political will and financial resources to bear on all phases of product development. IPM's key achievements over the past 13 years include:

- **Negotiating innovative mechanisms like royalty-free licenses and worldwide rights for antiretroviral (ARV) drugs.** Since our inception, IPM has negotiated five non-exclusive, royalty-free licenses — and one exclusive worldwide rights agreement — from pharmaceutical companies to develop eight different ARVs as microbicides. These licenses ensure future IPM products will be affordable where the need is most urgent.
- **Developing the monthly dapivirine ring and advancing it to Phase III efficacy trials.** IPM developed a long-acting vaginal ring designed to deliver the ARV dapivirine continuously over the course of a month, which could offer women a practical and discreet way to protect themselves against HIV. We brought the ring from concept to the current Phase III efficacy trials in just seven years after acquiring the license for dapivirine.
- **Conducting rigorous research studies.** IPM has worked in 11 countries in Africa, Europe and North America to conduct more than 25 clinical trials to date on a variety of products as well as 13 incidence studies and two acceptability studies, all of which continue to inform our work and the field's.
- **Strengthening medical research capacity in Africa.** IPM has collaborated with in-country partners and research staff to build and strengthen capacity at more than 15 research centers across sub-Saharan Africa, and trained and developed the skills of more than 600 research center clinical staff, including community engagement teams on microbicide trial implementation. These staff members are well-equipped to conduct high-quality HIV prevention and related clinical trials.

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- **Streamlining manufacturing processes.** IPM led a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility to produce prototype gels and rings for early trials, resolving a manufacturing bottleneck and saving costs for over 10 clinical studies. We transferred dapivirine ring production for our Phase III program to an external manufacturer to ensure cost-efficiencies for large-scale production and are evaluating options for post-trial access.
- **Advancing an MPT to address women's broader sexual and reproductive health needs.** Because HIV and unintended pregnancy are significant causes of health complications and death for women worldwide, IPM is developing a new multipurpose prevention technology (MPT) — a 90-day dapivirine-contraceptive ring designed to offer both HIV prevention and contraception. A Phase I trial is planned for later this year.
- **Developing the first combination ARV ring.** IPM is also developing the first combination ARV vaginal ring, the dapivirine-maraviroc ring. Combining ARVs with different mechanisms of action may provide greater protection against HIV than a single drug alone.

What Does the Future Hold?

- **The first long-acting, female-initiated HIV prevention product potentially brought to market.** IPM's dapivirine ring is in two parallel Phase III trials. The Ring Study, being conducted by IPM, and the ASPIRE study, being conducted by our clinical trial partner the Microbicide Trials Network, are designed to provide the evidence needed to license the ring, pending efficacy results by early 2016.
- **Access to products where the need is urgent.** IPM is collaborating with global, regional and national partners to plan for the potential roll-out, availability and affordability of the dapivirine ring to women in developing countries. IPM is also working with regulatory agencies in developing countries as well as the World Health Organization, the European Medicines Agency, and the US Food and Drug Administration to prepare for dapivirine ring licensure.
- **Innovative pipeline and novel mechanisms of action.** IPM is developing a variety of products in novel formulations that advance the science of HIV prevention and expand women's options. These include the 90-day contraceptive-dapivirine ring as well as single ARV and combination ARV rings, films and tablets with ARVs that have different mechanisms of action.

From Promise to Product

As women have increasingly become the face of HIV over the past decade, IPM has remained true to its vision by pioneering critically needed microbicide research and development. The possibility of putting new life-saving products into women's hands is within our reach.

IPM extends its deepest thanks to our partners around the world and to our generous donors, all of whom amplify our efforts to improve women's health. Only by continuing to unite scientific discovery with political will and financial commitment, will we meet women's urgent sexual and reproductive health needs globally.