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## FEMALE CONDOM NEWS



### MEDIA ROUNDUP

News about the regulatory changes in the United States continue to filter through US media outlets, while news outlets based in Ghana recently featured articles on the female condom in Ghanaian and Kenyan contexts.

The New York Post highlighted the September 2018 US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [administrative rule](#) that changes the name from "female" to "internal" condom, approves both vaginal and anal use of

the product, and loosens the requirements for regulatory approval in light of decades of evidence about its safety. In the article, [Female condom is getting a gender-fluid rebrand, FDA says](#), author Hannah Sparks emphasizes the benefit of shifting to a gender-inclusive name, as well as the possibilities the regulatory change has created for the introduction of new internal/female condom products into the US market.

In [Why using a female condom will blow your mind - literally](#), the Modern Ghana website touts the benefits of the internal/female condom, and specifically the FC2, including reduced skin-to-skin contact as compared to the "male" condom, enhanced pleasure, and the value of a receptive-partner controlled method. The website also featured an article, [Low patronage of female condoms & Ghana's FP 2020 targets](#), that explores levels of knowledge and low uptake of the internal/female condom in Ghana. Dr. Anthony Nsiah Asare and Angela Boateng of the Ghana Health Service (GHS) discussed barriers to use as well as steps being taken by the GHS to improve education and availability of the internal/female condom, as well as to meet overall targets for modern contraceptive method use in line with the FP2020 goals.

### MARKET NEWS

In late September, [HLL Lifecare Ltd.](#), the manufacturer of the VA w.o.w. internal/female condom, announced a partnership with the IXu marketing firm in the lead up to product distribution in the European market. Portuguese distributor [Clinifar](#) is reportedly slated to handle distribution. According to their [press release](#), HLL Lifecare plans to seek approval for entry into the US market from the US FDA in 2019.

## RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

Researchers from the Botswana Ministry of Health and the Department of Health Studies at the University of South Africa recently published results of a study of young women's knowledge and attitudes about the internal/female condom. They also investigated contraceptive use inclusive of all methods, as well as barriers to uptake of the female/internal condom. Researchers analyzed self-administered survey responses completed in 2015 by 95 women at three health center sites in Jwaneng. The abstract follows below and full text is available online at [Curationis](#).

**Mokgetse M, Ramukumba MM. Female condom acceptability and use amongst young women in Botswana. *Curationis*. 2018 Sep; 41(1):e1-e6. doi: 10.4102/curationis.v41i1.1887.**

**BACKGROUND:** The female condoms are a barrier method of contraception. The FC1 female condom is made from soft thin plastic called polyurethane and has been replaced by FC2 female condom, which is made of synthetic latex. The female condom is worn inside the vagina and acts as a barrier to prevent semen getting to the womb. It is about 75% - 82% effective with normal use. When used correctly all of the time, female condoms are 95% effective. Despite evidence of its effectiveness, the use of the female condom has continued to face resistance from both women and men.

**OBJECTIVES:** The objectives of this study were to determine clients' level of knowledge of female condom, identify predominant methods of contraception, examine young women's views regarding the female condom and identify barriers to the use of female condoms by young women.

**METHODS:** A simple random sampling approach was used to recruit young women between 15 and 34 years in Jwaneng, Botswana. Data were collected using self-administered structured questionnaire from women accessing healthcare services in the three health facilities in 2015. Descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis and the chi-square test techniques were applied

using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) statistical programme version 23 for Windows to analyse data.

**RESULTS:** The findings based on factor loadings show low utilisation of the female condom and highlights the significant challenges about the material, size, shape and timing of insertion. Respondents had stronger views on the structure of the condom. There was no significant relationship between attitude and method of contraception.

**CONCLUSION:** Acceptability of the female condom involves complex factors such as women position and decision-making power in a relationship, attitude and knowledge. Attitude, knowledge and power relations play a role in the extent to which women would want to try or use it. Various strategies need to be developed to effectively promote the female condom amongst young women.

**KEYWORDS:** Acceptability; Botswana; HIV/AIDS prevention; female condom; young women

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## **ABOUT US**

### **Mission of CBAS**

Established in 2004, the Cervical Barrier Advancement Society (CBAS) aims to raise the profile of cervical barrier methods, including diaphragms, caps, female condoms, and other devices, and to share the latest news and resources related to these methods.

### **CBAS contact information**

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**Note:** We are always updating our research listings on the CBAS website. Please contact us at [info@cervicalbarriers.org](mailto:info@cervicalbarriers.org) with study updates or information on new research related to cervical barriers or female condoms.

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