U.S. Armed Cervixes

September 1, 2003 By Carolyn Sinclair

Could an upstart diaphragm offer women condom-worthy HIV protection? Not quite yet, but the FemCap, a revamped diaphragm with a unique spermicide-delivery system that can patrol the cervix for 48 hours, is no mere baby-bouncer. Already available in the U.S., the FemCap is rarin' to pack any of the yet-to-be-approved microbicides. The HIV-hating gels or foams—now being researched with $60 mil in funding from our fave fallopian philanthropists Bill and Melinda Gates (see "Kiss & Gel," POZ, June 2002)—won't hit the market till 2007 at the earliest. But POZ couldn't wait to storm the beaches of Del Mar, California, FemCap's corporate birthplace, to ask women whether they'd use the gizmo and the up-and-coming rebel gels.

Visit www.femcap.com for more insight on the furtive fighter.

Val Pon,
42, teacher

"Globally, I think it's an incredible idea. Women could protect their sexual rights in cultures where men may not take precautions. In this country, it offers options for people who want to be sexually active with multiple partners."

Lisa Villa,
19, student

"If it's at least 90-something percent effective against HIV, I would probably use it so I don't have to depend on the guy. They never want to use anything anyway."

Jessica Carrano,
18, student

"I'd definitely be interested in [the microbicide], but it would make me feel unsure—I wouldn't really know if it was foolproof or if it was really working to protect against HIV."

Sylvia Villa,
45, consultant

"It could let you be a little more spontaneous. HIV can affect anyone, so everyone should take advantage of something that could prevent it."

Red Concepcion,
24, analyst

“I think it’s a great idea. I don’t think I’d personally use it, because I believe in the rhythm method. But it’s great that it’s giving women more power to fight HIV.”

Kecia Lee,
21, student

“I would definitely use it if it wasn’t uncomfortable in any way. I’m always sick and nauseous on the Pill, so I’d consider another form of birth control. It’d be awesome if all women could feel their physical health was in their own hands.”

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