

What They're Saying About The Female Condom



U.S. Champions

The best overall approach to HIV prevention is the one that provides the most options, and the female condom must be one of the options. The ever-growing body of knowledge around the female condom shows that it is an important tool in protecting and empowering both women and men.

— **Mitchell Warren**, *Executive Director, AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition*

There is no question that the female condom is now an indispensable tool for many women. With no other form of women-initiated protection currently available, this effective barrier method for contraception and disease prevention needs much more widespread distribution. Female condoms have been shown to be widely acceptable if given the right kind of advocacy and user support.

— **Judy Norsigian**, *Executive Director, Our Bodies Ourselves and Co-Author, Our Bodies, Ourselves*

When I introduce the female condom to ladies in my education sessions, they get really excited. They frequently tell me they wish they'd known about this a long time ago. They leave the session energized and ready to go home and talk to their partners about this female-initiated method for STI prevention and pregnancy. When they return to the education sessions, many say their partners enjoyed the female condom better than traditional male condoms.

— **Jennifer Marshall**, *Community Outreach Coordinator, Memphis Center for Reproductive Health*

Research shows that many women and men like the female condom and use it when they would not have used a male condom. It must be made accessible to those women who need and want it.

— **Susie Hoffman, DrPH**, *Research Scientist, HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies at the New York State Psychiatric Institute and Columbia University*

Family Health International research has produced evidence of the potential public health benefits gained from adding the female condom to male condom distribution. I am optimistic that consistent access to this female-initiated barrier method could allow more women to achieve a level of protection that substantially reduces the risk of STI acquisition.

— **Theresa Hatzell Hoke**, *Senior Research Associate, Family Health International*

The whole attitude toward female condoms is changing in the Mississippi Delta. Initially, women did not know what to think about them. But over time, education and reinforcement have made a difference. In some communities, we now get more requests for female condoms than male condoms.

— **Charles Myles**, *Executive Director and Co-Founder, Community Impact, Inc.; Yazoo City, MS*

[The female condom] gives women—who up until now only had the option of saying “no” if their partner was not willing to wear a condom—an alternative.

— **Steve Sawicki**, *Director of HIV Services, Whitney M. Young Jr. Health Services; Albany, NY*

I want to make sure there is a female condom in the hands of anyone who wants to use it.

— **Monica Sweeney**, *Assistant Commissioner of the NY Health Department's HIV Prevention and Control Bureau.*

International Champions

This is a 15-year scandal born of ignorance and inertia. We now know that millions of women might have been spared HIV and unwanted pregnancies, and (could have) empowered themselves in the process, if they had access to this simple method.

— **Mary Robinson**, *Oxfam's Honorary President*

How long will we assume that women in the developing world have no power to negotiate safe sex? How long will we assume that men don't care about HIV prevention and the lives of their wives and children? The facts are clear. Women want access to the female condom and many men are willing to have their partners use the female condom.

— **Dr. Musimbi Kanyoro**, *Director of the Population Program, Packard Foundation, and Former Secretary-General, World YWCA*

HIV/AIDS is becoming a women's pandemic, and women need prevention now. They need the only tool for HIV prevention that women can initiate. They need access to the female condom and education on its use.

— **Beatrice Were**, *Uganda HIV/AIDS Advocate and 2005 Recipient of the Human Rights Watch Award*

[T]he female condom is not a luxury to many women, especially in Africa and probably elsewhere too. It is a necessity that determines life or death.

— **Daisy Nyamukapa**, *UNFPA Zimbabwe*

It has always been difficult for women to have the courage of telling a man to put on a condom whenever they are having sex, but this time around they will have a chance to protect themselves.

— **Clemente Naunje**, *Banja Lamtsogolo*

Women are more confident now. And they view female condoms as their own product, which gives them pleasure as well as protection.

— **Sanjeev Gaikwa**, *Director of Family Health International (FHI), Western Region*

If we have this new condom, we will get our men to use it ... It will help us a lot.

— **Female participant in group discussion near Durban, South Africa**