

HIGH ACCEPTABILITY AND SATISFACTION WITH NUVARING USE

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The user's opinion of a contraceptive is an important determinant of its acceptability. NuvaRing is a combined contraceptive vaginal ring which is used for one cycle (comprising of three weeks of ring use followed by a one-week ring-free period). The ring can easily be inserted and removed by the women themselves. Acceptability and satisfaction were determined by questionnaire from two large, open-label studies conducted in 14 countries. Questionnaires were administered in the first week following cycles 3, 6 and 13, or after premature discontinuation. Questions were asked about NuvaRing's ease of use, the clarity of instructions, sexual comfort, the woman's cycle and satisfaction.

The studies enrolled 2393 women (mean age \pm SD: 28.3 \pm 5.7 years), of whom 1950 (82%) completed cycle 3 questionnaires. Overall, 53% of participants had no children and 53% had switched to NuvaRing from other hormonal contraception. Forty-seven per cent of participants had decided to use NuvaRing because it was a new and appealing method of contraception.

Nearly all users considered the ring easy to insert (96%) and remove (98%). Eighteen per cent of women and 32% of partners reported feeling the ring at least occasionally during intercourse; however, most partners did not object to women using the ring. Overall, the majority of women felt comfortable with the ring during intercourse. Reductions in both dysmenorrhea and the length of the withdrawal bleed were reported during ring use.

Satisfaction with the ring was high at cycle 3 and onwards, reaching 96% of women being (very) satisfied at the end of treatment. Ninety per cent of all responders (and 97% of women completing the trial) would recommend the method to others. At baseline, the preferred contraceptive method was oral tablets (66% of users). After 3 cycles, the ring was considered the best option (81%); this percentage increased to 86% at cycle 13.

High satisfaction at cycle 3 was a good predictor of low subsequent discontinuation risk. The validated questionnaire had a predictive value for early discontinuation. Notably, most women who discontinued the study, did so during the first three cycles of use.

This analysis demonstrates that users express good acceptability and a high level of satisfaction with NuvaRing.