

## Call to Discontinue Nonoxynol-9 for Rectal Use

We, the undersigned, in light of recent statements by the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control, urge all people to cease the rectal use of products containing Nonoxynol-9 (N-9). We are concerned that many people mistakenly believe that N-9 provides extra protection against HIV and STDs when used rectally when in fact there is reason to think that rectal use of N-9 may increase risk of infection.

The Centers for Disease Control states: "...N-9 can damage the cells lining the rectum, thus providing a portal of entry for HIV and other sexually transmissible agents. Therefore, N-9 should not be used as a microbicide or lubricant during anal sex."

The World Health Organization states: "N-9 should not be used rectally." (Further) "There is no published scientific evidence that N-9-lubricated condoms provide any additional protection against pregnancy or STIs compared with condoms lubricated with other products. Since adverse effects due to the addition of N-9 to condoms cannot be excluded, such condoms should no longer be promoted."

N-9 is an ingredient that is contained in three types of over-the-counter products: in contraceptive products designed exclusively for vaginal use (diaphragm jelly, contraceptive foams and creams); in some sexual lubricants; and on the outer lubrication in some lubricated condoms.

Given the evidence cited above, we call on manufacturers of condoms and sexual lubricants to discontinue adding N-9 to future lots of their product. Consumers should examine labels of lubricants they use for anal sex to ensure that the product does not contain N-9. Providers should advise clients not to use rectally products that are designed for other purposes; specifically, vaginal foams, gels or creams that contain N-9 for contraceptive purposes should not be used rectally.

We are not calling for the removal of N-9 contraceptive products designed exclusively for vaginal use because they remain an important contraceptive option for women who are at low risk of HIV infection or other STDs. Moreover, evidence suggests that N-9 is considerably more toxic at low doses when used in the rectum than the vagina.

In light of the deleterious side effects of rectal use associated with products containing N-9, it is essential that we identify a lubricant safe for rectal use. Therefore, we further call on the public health community and lubricant manufacturers to undertake safety studies in humans to establish minimally that products marketed explicitly or implicitly for rectal use do not cause disruption of the rectal epithelium, as does N-9.

Finally we emphasize the importance of on-going research to develop vaginal and rectal microbicides that are both safe and effective. It is imperative that truly effective microbicides be developed as soon as possible and we commit ourselves to this ongoing effort. A safe and effective microbicide can be developed, but N-9 is not this product.

Signed:

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**Organizations:**

Academy for Educational Development  
Washington, DC

AIDS Action  
Baltimore

AIDS Action  
Washington, DC

AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth and Families  
Washington, DC

AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power  
Atlanta, GA

AIDS Foundation of Chicago  
Chicago, Illinois

AIDS Research Alliance  
West Hollywood, CA

AIDS Survival Project  
Atlanta, GA

AIDS Treatment Data Network  
New York, NY

AIDS Treatment Initiatives  
Atlanta, GA

AIDS Treatment News  
Philadelphia, PA

AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition  
Washington D.C.

Alan Guttmacher Institute  
New York, NY

Alliance for Microbicide Development  
Silver Spring, MD

American Foundation for AIDS Research  
New York, NY

American Social Health Association  
Research Triangle Park, NC

Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center  
San Francisco, CA

Assoc. of Reproductive Health Professionals  
Washington D.C.

Australian Federation of AIDS Organization  
Sydney, Australia

Australian Society for HIV Medicine  
New South Wales

Black Educational AIDS Project  
Baltimore, MD

Boston Women's Health Book Collective  
Boston, MA

Cairde  
Dublin, Ireland

The California Microbicides Initiative  
Los Angeles, CA

The Canadian AIDS Society  
Ottawa, ON

Center for Women's Policy Studies  
Washington, D.C.

European AIDS Treatment Group  
Europe

Family Health International  
Research Triangle Park, UK

Family Planning Association  
London, UK

Feminist Women's Health Center  
Atlanta, Georgia

Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research  
Brooklyn, NY

Gay and Lesbian Medical Association  
San Francisco, CA

Gay Men's Health Crisis  
New York, NY

Global AIDS Action Network  
San Francisco, CA

Howard Brown Health Center  
Chicago, IL

Ibis Reproductive Health  
Cambridge, MA

International AIDS Vaccine Initiative  
New York, NY

International Center for Research on Women  
Washington DC

International Council of AIDS Services Orgs.  
Toronto, Canada

International Family Health  
London, UK

International Foundation for Alternative  
Research on Aids  
Portland, OR

The International HIV/AIDS Alliance  
Brighton, UK

International Partnership for Microbicides  
Washington, DC

International Women's Health Coalition  
New York, NY

John Snow, Inc  
Boston, MA

Latina Women's Health Organization  
Washington, DC

Latino Commission on AIDS  
New York, NY

Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center  
Los Angeles, CA

Microbicides as an Alternative Solution  
Berkley, CA

National AIDS Trust  
London, UK

National Coalition for LGBT Health  
Washington, DC

National Women's Health Network  
Washington, DC

National Family Planning and Reproductive  
Health Association (NFPRHA)  
Washington, DC

No Limit for Women Project  
Yaounde, Cameroon

Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
New York, NY

Program for Appropriate Technology in Health  
Seattle, WA

Project Inform  
San Francisco, CA

Reproductive Health Matters  
London, UK

Reproductive Health Technologies Project  
Washington, DC

The SafeGuards Project  
Philadelphia, PA

San Francisco AIDS Foundation  
San Francisco, CA

SIECUS  
New York, NY

Terrence Higgins Trust  
London, UK

Treatment Action Group  
New York, NY

WGBAN HIV Care Network  
Brooklyn, New York