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Contraceptive acceptability and efficacy of female condom: a prospective study

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Objectives

To make female condom an accepted and available form of contraception, an effort needs to be made to promote it and make it more available. The present study is an effort towards assessing the acceptability and efficacy of female condoms in our population.

Method

100 women between the age of 18-40 years attending the gynae OPD and needing any temporary method of contraception were recruited and they were explained in detail about the procedure of use of female condoms. The contraceptive efficacy of the female condom was to be calculated at the end of 6 months of use by gross cumulative life table perfect use pregnancy rate. However, the women under study were not regular in follow up and used male condoms also along with female condoms during the study period. Due to this inconsistent use of female condoms by the study subjects, contraceptive efficacy could not be calculated.

Results

Of 100 women, only 37 had heard about the female condom, only 17 women had heard about sexually transmitted disease, and that use of male or female condoms can prevent their transmission. 22 out of 100 women did not continue with the use of female condoms. Reduction in sexual pleasure was reported by 24 women and two of them found the insertion of female condom difficult or painful. 83% women reported that they were satisfied by the use of female condoms and they would continue to use them if they were easily available. When both partners were taken together, female condoms were satisfying to 78% of both, 5% of female partner only, 1% of male partner only and unsatisfying to 16% of both partners.

Recommendations

Female condom can be integrated into existing family welfare programmes. Widespread promotion of the female condom will help to accept this method as a potential contraceptive method for all sexually active women and men, and not just for those who risk engage in high-risk sexual behavior or one living with HIV or AIDS.