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F.8 Ethinylestradiol 0.12 mg + Etonogestrel 0.015 mg vaginal ring

MSF strongly supports the inclusion of Ethinylestradiol 0.12 mg + Etonogestrel 0.015 mg vaginal ring for contraception in the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines.

The incidence of unintended pregnancy has declined in the last decade, but the rate remains high, particularly in developing countries. Unintended pregnancy carries significant social, economic and health consequences and disproportionately affects women in low- and middle-income countries.

Currently, the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines includes only a progesterone-releasing vaginal ring, reserved for use in women actively breastfeeding at least 4 times per day.

The combined contraceptive vaginal ring is effective over a month, releasing on average 0.120 mg/day of etonogestrel and 0.015 mg/day of ethinylestradiol over a three-week period.

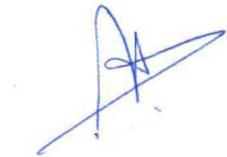
This combined contraceptive vaginal ring is safe, easy to use, offer a good cycle control and the possibility to decide the time of initiation and discontinuation of the contraception. Unlike the oral contraceptives, the efficacy cannot be affected by digestive disorders such as vomiting. In comparison with the required daily intake for combined oral contraceptive pills, the once-a-month self-administration is easier and prevents the event of missed or delayed contraceptive pills.

MSF would like to draw the attention of the Expert Committee to the fact that the ethinylestradiol + etonogestrel vaginal ring is mainly registered in high regulated countries and is not affordable for low- and middle-income countries.

This inclusion of a combined contraceptive vaginal ring in the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines will serve as a basis for National Essential Medicines lists and therefore will help to use this contraceptive more widely, in particular in low- and middle-income countries, and will give a strong signal to manufacturers, generic producers, country programs, international donors, and health regulatory authorities.

In light of these elements, MSF urges the 23rd Expert Committee on the Selection and Use of Essential Medicines to include the ethinylestradiol + etonogestrel vaginal ring in the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines.

For Médecins Sans Frontières

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Myriam Henkens, MD, MPH
International Medical Coordinator