

# Sub-Saharan women using modern contraceptives more likely to be HIV tested

April 26 2016

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Women in sub-Saharan Africa who use modern contraceptives are more likely to be tested for HIV than those who do not, according to a study published April 25, 2016 in the open-access journal *PLOS ONE* by Katherine Center from the University of Arizona and colleagues.

HIV/AIDS remains a major public health challenge for women in sub-Saharan Africa, and medical appointments for use of modern contraceptives could provide an opportunity to offer confidential HIV testing. The authors of the present study analysed data from the Demographic and Health survey for Congo, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Uganda to examine the relationship between use of modern contraceptives and HIV testing in women.

They found that in the total pooled sample and specifically in Mozambique, women who used modern contraceptives, including [oral contraceptives](#) and condoms, were more likely to undergo HIV testing than women who relied on traditional contraceptive methods, such as periodic abstinence or withdrawal. However, a low proportion of the overall population in Mozambique was found to use modern contraceptives. This positive association was not seen in the other countries studied but was seen in the pooled total sample.

While this study was limited to a two-year period and cannot show causation between use of modern contraceptives and increased HIV testing, the authors suggest their work highlights a missed opportunity to provide education and HIV testing concurrently with condom and pill

provision. The authors propose that integration of HIV testing, counselling, and treatment into family planning programs could help to reduce the burden of HIV in sub-Saharan Africa.

**More information:** Katherine E. Center et al, Contraceptive Use and Uptake of HIV-Testing among Sub-Saharan African Women, *PLOS ONE* (2016). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0154213](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0154213)

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