

BE THE GENERATION

TO END THE AIDS EPIDEMIC

BTG News

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From the Editor

Beyoncé taught us that “girls run the world,” but did you know that women also run HIV research? All five of the HIV research networks funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are led or co-led by women. Women are at the forefront of HIV research in lab centers, statistical and data management centers, and as community educators and advocates. Thousands of women around the world are currently enrolled as participants in studies to find an HIV cure, an HIV vaccine, and other HIV treatment and prevention modalities. Plus, [the lead scientist](#) behind the NIH’s COVID-19 vaccine program is—yep, you guessed it—a woman.

We dedicate this issue of *BTG News* to women. Transgender women, cisgender women, nonbinary fems. Black women, Indigenous women, Latin women. Asian women, Middle Eastern women, White women. Women who are scientists. Women who participate in science. Women who are frontline healthcare workers and women who are sex workers. Women who live at the intersections of these categories and women who cannot be categorized. The HIV prevention research landscape has never been more exciting, and women are at the center of it all. Read on to learn more. As always, share our [resources](#) and [stay in touch](#). Happy Women’s Herstory Month!

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Are you amped up about the news on lab-made antibodies for HIV prevention? We are! The proof-of-concept AMP studies demonstrated that a broadly neutralizing antibody (bnAb) called VRC01 was effective at preventing the acquisition of HIV strains that were sensitive to the bnAb. This was assessed by a laboratory test that measures a virus' susceptibility to neutralization by an antibody.



AMP Study logo

The two studies (HVTN 704/HPTN 085 and HVTN 703/HPTN 081) opened in April 2016 and successfully enrolled 4,623 participants—nearly half of which were cisgender and transgender women. The AMP studies are sponsored and funded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health. The studies are conducted jointly by the HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN) and HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN). Click [here](#) to view the press release.

The HPTN Scholars Program is pleased to announce the next group of talented scholars. During the next 18 months, they will conduct secondary analyses of HPTN study data, working alongside leading HIV prevention researchers affiliated with the Network. More than fifty (50) scholars have participated in the program since it started in 2010. The U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse, and the U.S. National Institute for Mental Health fund the HPTN Scholars program. Click [here](#) to meet the Scholars.



The latest cohort of HPTN Scholarrs



HIV VACCINE
TRIALS NETWORK

HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN)

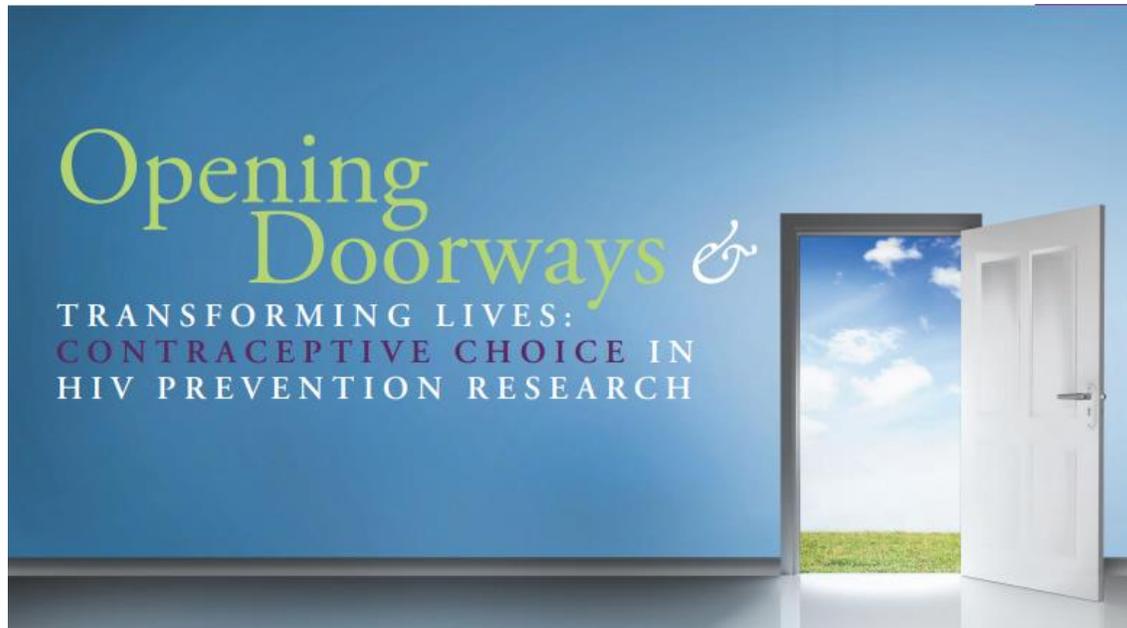
We're living in unprecedented times for HIV prevention research, and we all have a role to play to ensure that future HIV prevention studies bring us closer to ending the epidemic. This is why the Global HIV Vaccine enterprise, in partnership with the HVTN, HPTN, and the Forum for Collaborative Research, has initiated the **"HIV Prevention Efficacy Trial Designs of the Future"** workshop. This workshop started in October 2020 and will run through May 2021. It involves a series of live events supported by pre-recorded presentations. These short-pre-recorded presentations (10-15 minutes) will be made available prior to each live event. Participants are encouraged to ask questions through the online platform ahead of and during the live events.

We look forward to an exciting series of events. Don't hesitate to share the events with your networks!

Twenty-eight abstracts by MTN were featured at the HIV Research for Prevention (HIVR4P) Virtual Conference, Jan. 27-28 and Feb. 3-4. Key vaginal studies presented included [MTN-044/IPM 053/CCN019](#), which evaluated a vaginal ring containing the antiretroviral drug dapivirine and the contraceptive hormone levonorgestrel. [Results showed](#) that sustained levels of each drug were delivered when the ring was used continuously for 90 days – levels likely sufficient to serve its dual purpose of protecting against HIV and unintended pregnancy. A reformulated version of the ring will be evaluated in an upcoming trial by the ring’s developer, the International Partnership for Microbicides, in collaboration with NIH’s Contraceptive Clinical Trials Network, to improve on its ability to stay in place. In the same HIVR4P session, preliminary results of [MTN-045](#), or the CUPID Study, were also presented. In MTN-045, 400 cisgender heterosexual couples in Uganda and Zimbabwe were interviewed about their views and preferences for potential dual-purpose products. More than 90 percent of the couples liked the idea of a two-in-one product, especially if it was framed first and foremost as a contraceptive rather than a method for HIV prevention.

In the HIVR4P [Bottoms Up](#) session, on-demand and behaviorally congruent HIV prevention products for people who practice anal sex took center stage. MTN researchers [reported the results](#) of three Phase I studies ([MTN-026](#), [MTN-033](#) and [MTN-037](#)) that found two gel-based products tested – dapivirine gel and PC-1005 – to be well-tolerated, with higher doses of the active drugs likely required to provide protection from HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

The latest installment in MTN’s “A Look Back...” series has been published. The story, [Opening Doorways & Transforming Lives: Contraceptive choice in HIV prevention Research](#), focuses on the groundbreaking work of the Contraceptive Action Team in expanding choice of pregnancy prevention options for participants in HIV research.



Me-ow! The Contraceptive Action Team (CAT) focuses on expanding choice in pregnancy prevention.

MTN's Behavioral Research Working Group is pleased to share the [MTN Social and Behavioral Compendium](#), a PowerPoint presentation that encompasses the entire history of social and behavioral research at the network. This document covers lessons learned and best practices from 2006 through 2020.



Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination (HANC)

HANC is pleased to share these webinar recordings, articles, videos, and other resources:

- [National Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#): The Women's HIV Research Collaborative commemorates NWGHAAD with an infographic focused on women and the latest HIV research.
- [Action Alert](#): a sign-on document by the Women's HIV Research Collaborative asking for everyone in the field to commit to scientific accuracy and cultural sensitivity in HIV and COVID-19 research
- [Women in HIV Cure-Related Research](#): a free downloadable training
- [Biomedical HIV Prevention for Women](#): a free downloadable training
- [Transgender Training Resources Homepage](#): the Division of AIDS at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases has put all its amazing resources related to research with transgender communities in one place. All resources are free; you may just need to create a free account if you don't have one already.

- [Be the Generation website](#): the best place to go for trustworthy information on biomedical HIV prevention research. Features sections on PrEP, U=U, Microbicides, HIV vaccine research, inspiring videos from researchers and community members, and even a quiz to test your knowledge of HIV prevention research.
- [COVID-19 Community Resources](#): In 2020, HANC formed the COVID-19 CAB Coalition (CCC). The CCC includes folks from the COVID-19 Prevention Network's Community Engagement Group, ACTG's ACTIV-2 CAB, AVAC's COVID-19 Advocates Advisory Board, The National CFAR Coalition, Stony Brook's COVID-19 CAB, Community Partners, and DAIDS. This resource page includes links to prevention and therapeutic studies, general information on COVID-19, links to webinars, and social media accounts to follow.
- [Webinar Library](#): a collection of over 30 of our webinar recordings on topics such as HIV & race, HIV & women, HIV genetic sequencing, HIV & aging, outreach & marketing, Native Americans & HIV, microbicides research, pregnancy & lactation in HIV research, HIV in the Latinx community, community engagement, and more.

Important Dates

- Wednesday, March 3: [Do I or Don't I: PLHIV Experiences & Concerns with COVID-19 Vaccines](#), a live webinar on COVID-19 vaccine considerations for people living with HIV
- Monday, March 8: [International Women's Day](#)
- Wednesday, March 10: [National Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)
- Saturday, March 20: [National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)
- March 30-31: [NMAC Biomedical HIV Prevention Summit](#)
- Saturday, April 10: [National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)
- Sunday, April 18: [National Transgender HIV Testing Day](#)
- Tuesday, May 18: [HIV Vaccine Awareness Day](#)
- Wednesday, May 19: [National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)