

Lactic Acid, Citric Acid, and Potassium Bitartrate Non-Hormonal Prescription Vaginal PH Modulator Gel for the Prevention of Pregnancy

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Abstract : Introduction: A non-hormonal prescription vaginal pH modulator (VPM) gel (Phexxi®), with active ingredients lactic acid, citric acid, and potassium bitartrate, has recently been approved for the prevention of pregnancy in the United States. The objective of this review is to compile the evidence available from published preclinical and clinical trials to support its use. Areas covered: PubMed was searched for published literature on VPM gel. Two Phase III trials were found on the clinicaltrials.gov database. The results demonstrated that VPM gel is safe, with minimal side effects, and effective (cumulative 6-7 cycle pregnancy rate of 4.1-13.65%, (Pearl Index 27.5) as a contraceptive. Microbicidal effects suggest the potential for the prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs); currently, a Phase III clinical trial is being conducted to evaluate the prevention of chlamydia and gonorrhea. Expert opinion: Non-hormonal reversible contraceptive options have been limited to the highly effective copper-releasing intrauterine device that requires insertion by a trained clinician and less effective coitally-associated barrier and spermicide options which are typically available over-the-counter. Spermicides, which improve the efficacy of barrier devices, may increase the risk of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/STIs. VPM gel provides a new safe, effective non-hormonal contraceptive option with the potential for prevention of STIs.

Keywords : citric acid, lactic acid, non-hormonal contraception, potassium bitartrate, topical vaginal contraceptive, vaginal pH modulator gel

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