

## **Supplementary information**

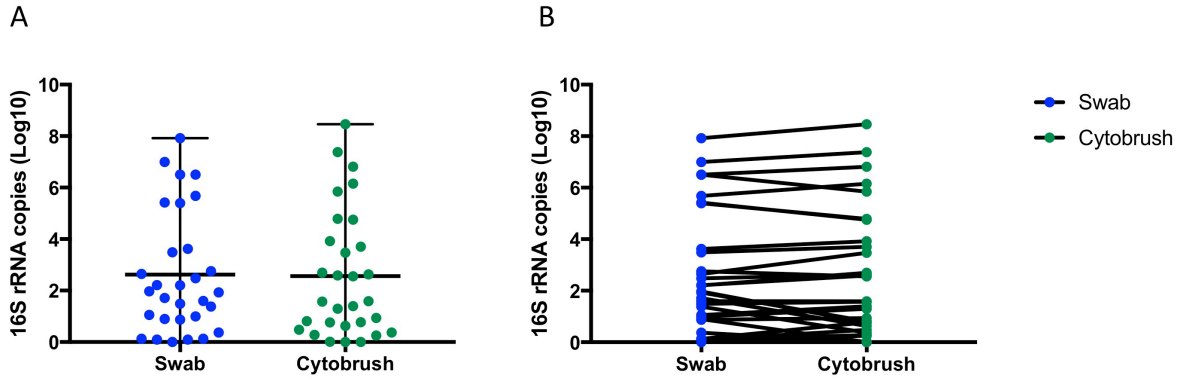
### **Comparison of vaginal microbiota sampling techniques: cytobrush versus swab**

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**Supplementary Table 1. Patient characteristics**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>n = 30</b>
<b>Age, years</b> Mean (SD, range)	30.8 (4.9, 26 – 43)
<b>Ethnicity , n/N (%)</b>	
Caucasian	27/30 (90.0)
Asian	3/30 (10.0)
Black	0/30 (0)
<b>Parity, n/N (%)</b>	
Nulliparous	20/30 (66.7)
Parous	10/30 (33.3)
<b>Smoking status, n/N (%)</b>	
Current smoker	5/30 (16.7)
Non-smoker	25/30 (83.3)
<b>Phase of menstrual cycle, n/N (%)</b>	
Luteal	8/30 (26.7)
Follicular	15/30 (50.0)
Unknown	7/30 (23.3)
<b>Contraception, n/N (%)</b>	
Nil	13/30 (43.3)
Condoms	5/30 (16.7)
COCP	5/30 (16.7)
POP	2/30 (6.7)
Copper IUD	1/30 (3.2)
Mirena IUS	2/30 (6.7)
Contraceptive implant	2/30 (6.7)
<b>Time since last intercourse, n/N (%)</b>	
>48 hours	26/30 (86.7)
<48 hours	4/30 (13.3)
<b>Histological severity of lesion</b>	
CIN2	20/30 (66.7)
CIN3	10/30 (33.3)

*CIN: Cervical intraepithelial neoplasia; COCP: Combined oral contraceptive pill; IUD: Intrauterine device; IUS: Intrauterine system; POP: Progesterone-only pill*



**Supplementary Figure 1. Comparison of Gardnerella vaginalis gene copies using qPCR**

There was no significant difference between the number of *G.vaginalis* gene copies present in paired swabs and cytobrush collected samples, normalised for total bacterial load (Figure 1) ( $p=0.6313$ ) (Paired t-test) (A). Where different the values were not consistently higher or lower with either technique (B).