

Condoms

Using a condom, while having sex, is a fairly effective way to prevent an unwanted pregnancy. A latex condom is also used to prevent sexually transmitted infections (STI's). These diseases include genital herpes, genital warts, gonorrhea, syphilis, chlamydia, hepatitis B and AIDS. The condom goes over the erect (hard) penis before it enters the sexual partner. The condom helps prevent the transfer of STI's by keeping semen from going into the sexual partner. Both partners are responsible for making sure a condom is used properly.

Where to Buy a Condom

Condoms can be bought in any drug store without a prescription, and they can be obtained free of charge from many family planning clinics. Condoms sold in washrooms are not recommended because they are likely to be of poor quality. A vending machine condom **may** be all right if:

- It is a latex condom.
- It is labeled for disease prevention, and
- The dispensing machine has not been exposed to extreme temperatures or sunlight.
- The expiration (use by) date on the package has not passed.

When to Put on the Condom

Put the condom on the penis when it is first erect and **before** it enters the sexual partner. Even the small amount of fluid that comes out before a man ejaculates carries sperm that can cause pregnancy. The fluid can also carry viruses or bacteria that cause STI's.

How to Put on and Use the Condom

1. Pinch the tip of the condom enough to leave a 1/2 inch space for semen to collect. The reservoir tip should be free of air to prevent stretching. Squeeze the air out of the top of the condom (Picture 1).



Picture 1 Pinch 1/2 inch on the end.

Continued on page 2

How to Put on and Use the Condom, continued

2. While pinching this 1/2 inch tip, place the condom against the end of the penis (Picture 2). An uncircumcised man should push the foreskin completely back before placing the condom against the end of his penis. Unroll the condom all the way up to the base of the penis (Picture 3). Put more lubricant on the outside.
3. If either partner feels the condom break, stop immediately and pull the penis out. Put on a new condom before continuing to have sex.
4. After ejaculation takes place and before the penis has lost its hardness, withdraw the penis and condom from your partner. **Hold the ring of the condom against the base of the penis during withdrawal** to keep the condom from slipping off and spilling any semen.
5. Wash the penis and surrounding area immediately after having sex.
6. Wrap the used condom in a piece of paper or plastic and throw it away.
7. Use a new condom every time you have sex. Do not reuse the same condom.



Picture 2 Unroll over erect penis.



Picture 3 Unroll all the way to the base of the penis.

Safety

- Use only **latex** condoms. "Natural" animal membrane condoms such as lambskin should not be used because they do not prevent spreading the AIDS, hepatitis or herpes viruses.
- Using latex condoms will help prevent the spread of the AIDS virus.
- **People with latex allergies should not use latex condoms.** If you have a latex allergy, be sure to discuss this with your health care provider. (Refer to the Helping Hand, *Allergy to Latex*, HH-I-189.) Polyurethane condoms should be used by people who are allergic to latex.
- **Never re-use a condom.** Use a new condom every time you have sex.
- If 1/2 inch of space is not left at the end of the condom, **it will probably break** (Picture 1).
- The package should say that the condoms are to prevent disease. Novelty condoms are intended only for sexual stimulation, not for protection. The package will not say anything about preventing disease. **This type is not recommended.**
- Unused condoms may last and be safe to use as long as 2 years after being purchased if kept in a cool place. However, always make sure to check the "use by" date and throw away any condoms that have passed their expiration dates.
- Do not carry condoms in the glove compartment of your car or in your wallet for a long time because heat weakens them.
- For more information about ways to prevent pregnancy that are more effective than condoms, ask your nurse or doctor.

Lubrication

Do not use Vaseline[®], petroleum jelly, hair oil, baby oil or cold cream on the condom, doing this can cause the condom to break.

If lubrication is desired, use a water-based or silicone lubricant, such as KY[®] or Astroglide[®] **contraceptive** jelly or cream on the outside of the condom or buy lubricated condoms.

Extra Protection

For extra protection against pregnancy and to keep from spreading STDs, a contraceptive jelly, cream or foam may be inserted into the female's vagina before sex.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor or nurse or call _____.