

# Condom

## What Is A Condom?

A condom (rubber or safe) is a thin latex covering that fits over the erect (hard) penis. It catches the semen (cum), and stops sperm from entering the woman's body.

There are many different types of condoms. Some condoms are non-latex. Some have tips at the end to catch the sperm. All condoms sold in Canada must meet government standards.

Some novelty items that are sold in specialty stores or through vending machines may look like condoms. Read the package carefully to be sure they are labeled as condoms, otherwise they will not protect you from pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

## Does It Work?

- In a year, 3 to 14 out of every 100 women get pregnant with partners using condoms.

## How Is It Used?

- Use a new condom every time you have sex.
- Store condoms at room temperature and out of direct sunlight. Do not carry them in your pocket or purse.
- **Do** use water-based products, like KY<sup>®</sup> jelly or Astroglide<sup>®</sup>, if you want the condom to be more slippery. You can buy these at the drugstore.
- **Do not** use Vaseline<sup>®</sup>, or any oil product with a latex condom. Oil makes the condom break.
- Yeast infection ovules or creams (e.g., Monistat<sup>®</sup>) may damage the latex in condoms, diaphragms and cervical caps, which may result in an unintended pregnancy. Abstinence is recommended while on the medication, and for three days afterwards. If abstinence is not possible, using condoms is better than using nothing at all. However, there is a greater risk of pregnancy and STIs.

## When using a condom look for:

- Latex or synthetic (polyurethane) condoms.
- Lubricated condoms (they don't break as easily).
- The expiry date printed on each condom package.

## To Put On A Condom:

1. Pinch the tip of the condom to squeeze out the air.
2. Unroll the condom all the way down to the base of an erect penis.
3. Put the condom on the erect (hard) penis before intercourse or any close contact with the vagina.

4. Pull out right after ejaculation (coming), before the penis becomes soft.
5. Hold onto the condom while pulling out.
6. Twist the top and tie in a knot if possible, before throwing it in the garbage. Do not flush condoms down the toilet.

### **What Are The Advantages?**

- Anyone can buy condoms at a drug store without a prescription.
- Condoms are a low cost form of birth control and easy to find.
- Small and easy to keep on hand.
- **Helps protect you against STIs and HIV.**

Condoms and the Birth Control Pill are an excellent team to provide protection against pregnancy and STIs.

### **Things To Think About:**

- Condoms may feel awkward at first.
- It may slightly decrease the feeling for the man.
- It may help the man keep his erection longer.
- Some condoms have nonoxynol-9, a chemical that kills sperm but may cause skin irritation and/or itchiness. This may increase the risk of HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) and other STIs. Avoid condoms with nonoxynol-9.
- If a condom breaks or is left inside the woman, Emergency Contraception (EC) can be prescribed by a doctor or pharmacist within 5 days to help stop a pregnancy.

### **Sexual Decision Making**

- You have the right to choose to have sexual intercourse or not.
- If you choose to have sex be sure to protect yourself from pregnancy and STIs.
- **To lower the risk of infection, use a condom every time you have sex.**
- Talk to your partner about these choices before you have sex!

### **For More Information Call:**

#### **Sexual and Reproductive Health**

Education/Health Promotion

403-955-6515

#### **Clinical Services**

Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre    5<sup>th</sup> floor, 1213-4<sup>th</sup> St. SW    403-955-6500

South Calgary Health Centre    31 Sunpark Plaza SE    403-943-9510

Sunridge Professional Building    406, 2675-36 St NE    403-944-7666

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