

Diaphragm

What Is A Diaphragm?

A diaphragm is made of latex (rubber) and is shaped like a saucer. It has a flexible rim. It covers the cervix (opening to the uterus) and stops the sperm from entering. You need to be fitted for the right size of diaphragm by a doctor.



Does It Work?

- In a year, 6 to 20 out of every 100 women will get pregnant while using the diaphragm.

How Is It Used?

- It is put in before intercourse, and must be kept in for at least 6 hours after intercourse.
- The diaphragm is used with a spermicide (cream or jelly that kills sperm).

What Are The Advantages?

- You can leave your diaphragm in place for up to 24 hours.
- It can be put in just before sex or up to 6 hours before sex.
- It is an option for women who cannot use a birth control method with hormones.
- It is reusable.

Things To Think About:

- Use a water-based cream or jelly, like KY Jelly or Astroglide, if you want extra lubrication (slipperiness). Any product with an oil-base (e.g. Vaseline, mineral oil) will cause the latex in your diaphragm to break down.
- Some women may get cystitis (bladder infection). Empty your bladder before you insert the diaphragm.
- Some women do not feel comfortable touching their vagina to insert and remove their diaphragm.
- Use a different form of birth control (like a condom) during your period, to avoid the small chance of Toxic Shock Syndrome.
- The diaphragm should be refitted, if you gain or lose weight of 10 lbs. (4.4 kg) or more, or if you have a baby.
- Yeast infection ovules or creams (e.g., Monistat®) 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.

Frequent use of nonoxynol-9, an ingredient in spermicide used in foam, gel or film, can cause vaginal irritation. This may increase the risk of HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

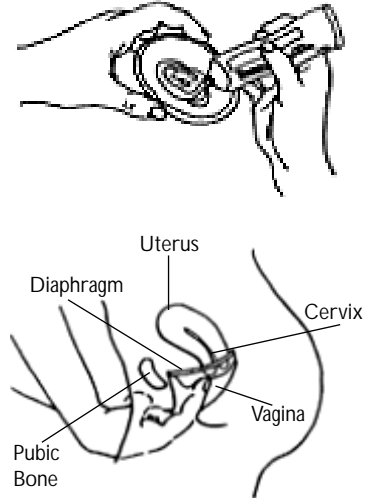


Sexual Decision Making

- 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.
Remember: A diaphragm does not protect you well from STIs. To lower your risk, use a condom every time you have sex.
- Talk to your partner about these choices before you have sex!

Directions For Use:

1. Put 1 tablespoon of spermicidal cream or jelly inside the diaphragm (see diagram). The jelly should be on the side that will lie next to your cervix.
2. Lie down, squat or raise one leg on a chair.
3. Squeeze the rim together and push the diaphragm into your vagina as far as it will go toward the backbone (see diagram).
4. When the diaphragm is most of the way in, let go of it and tuck the front edge of the diaphragm up behind your pubic bone.
5. It is very important to make sure that you can feel your cervix (feels like the tip of your nose) covered by the soft rubber of the diaphragm.
6. You should not be aware of your diaphragm once it is correctly inserted. If it is uncomfortable, it is probably not in the right position. Remove it and try inserting it again.
7. To remove it, put a finger behind the front rim of the diaphragm and pull the diaphragm down and out of the vagina.
8. Do **not** keep the diaphragm in your body longer than 24 hours.



Note: If you have intercourse **more than once** during this time:

- Leave your diaphragm in place.
- Insert an applicator of cream or jelly into your vagina.

To care for your diaphragm:

1. Wash your diaphragm after each use with mild, non-perfumed soap and warm water.
2. Rinse and dry it completely.
3. Store it in a cool, dry place.
4. Check it regularly for holes by holding it up to the light.
5. Replace it every 1-2 years, or sooner if the rim is bent.

For More Information Call:

Sexual and Reproductive Health

944-7115

Family Planning Clinics

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|------------|------------------------|----------|
| • Downtown | 323-7th Ave SE | 944-7111 |
| • South | 31 Sunpark Plaza SE | 943-9510 |
| • Sunridge | 406, 2675-36 Street NE | 944-7666 |

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