



MALE
condom

FEMALE
condom



THE BASICS



- Available in latex, polyurethane, polyisoprene, and lamb skin. Lamb skin condoms do not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Wide variety of sizes, colors, and textures.



- New version made of Nitrile
- Covers all of the vagina and part of the labia
- One size, colorless, odorless and non-allergenic



EFFECTIVENESS



- Both male and female condoms are highly effective at preventing pregnancy and STIs—*as long as they are used consistently and correctly.*



COMMON ERRORS AND PROBLEMS WITH USE

The types of errors that can reduce effectiveness are largely the same for both female and male condoms:



- Failure to use a condom during each act of intercourse
- Waiting too long to insert or put on a condom (penis comes into contact with vagina before condom is in place)
- Occasional condom tear before or during sex
- Semen spilling from a condom during withdrawal (male) or while removing it (female)
- Break in condom due to manufacturing problems (rare)



BENEFITS



- Reduces the risk of pregnancy and STIs that are transmitted by fluids, including HIV.
- Reduces the risk of transmission of STIs that are spread through skin-to-skin contact (herpes, syphilis, chancroid and HPV) on the area covered by the condom.



- Reduces the risk of pregnancy and STIs, including HIV.
- Allows a woman to protect herself from pregnancy and STIs without relying on the male condom.
- Can be inserted anywhere from immediately before to up to 2 hours before intercourse.
- Can stay in place whether or not a man maintains an erection.



COST AND AVAILABILITY



- Often available free at public health or Planned Parenthood clinics
- Available at most drugstores, in vending machines, by mail order, and at certain healthcare clinics
- Prices vary, but generally inexpensive
- No prescription needed



- Not as widely available as male condoms, but typically available at many STI clinics or family planning clinics
- Also available in many drugstores as well as online
- Typical cost is \$2 to \$3.
- No prescription needed



HELPFUL TIPS AND GUIDANCE



- Don't use a condom that is brittle, sticky, or discolored.
- If using a latex condom, do not use an oil-based substance (like Vaseline®) as a lubricant. Use only water-based lubricants.
- Don't carry condoms in your wallet for long periods of time or store them in your car.
- Store condoms in a cool, dry place away from sunlight and heat.



- If a condom tears or breaks, the outer ring is pushed up inside the vagina, or the condom bunches up inside the vagina during intercourse, remove it and insert another condom.
- Since female condoms are latex free, oil-based or water-based lubricants can be added on the inside and outside.



- If a condom package is damaged, don't use the condom because it also may be damaged.
- Use each condom only once.
- Use a new condom for each sexual act.
- Be careful not to tear condoms with sharp fingernails or jewelry.
- Do not use a female condom and a male condom at the same time. Friction between them can cause them to bunch up or tear.
- If you feel a condom break during intercourse, stop right away and put on a new one. Remember, ejaculation does not have to occur for a pregnancy to result (pre-ejaculatory fluids can contain active sperm), or for an infection to be transmitted.
- When you remove the condom after intercourse, and you notice that it is torn or broken, some sperm may have spilled inside the vagina, increasing the risk of pregnancy. Women should ask their pharmacist about emergency contraception (Plan B).
- Always throw condoms in the trash after use. Never flush them down the toilet.

LEARN MORE ABOUT CONDOMS AT WWW.ASHASEXUALHEALTH.ORG

Condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are effective at reducing the risk of transmission of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. The American Sexual Health Association (ASHA) supports the promotion and use of condoms to limit the spread of sexually transmitted infections and their harmful consequences.

