

Condom (Male)

What is a condom?

A condom is a thin covering that fits over a hard penis. It decreases the risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) by stopping sperm and body fluids from passing between partners.

How well does a condom work?

- There's about an **85%** chance of getting pregnant after 1 year of having unprotected sex.
- With typical use (this means not following the exact directions) a condom is **82%** effective at preventing pregnancy.
- With perfect use (this means you follow the exact directions all the time) a condom is **98%** effective at preventing pregnancy.
- Condoms used with other forms of birth control give the best protection from pregnancy.
- Latex and polyurethane condoms will help protect you from pregnancy, STIs, and HIV. Lambskin condoms will help protect you from pregnancy, but not STIs or HIV.



How do I use a condom?

- Put a condom on **before** you have any sexual contact. Use a new condom every time you have sex. Never use 2 male condoms together or a male and vaginal condom together. It increases the risk of both condoms breaking.
- Never reuse condoms. Store them at room temperature and out of direct sunlight. You can store latex condoms in a wallet for up to 1 month.
- Most condoms are lubricated. This helps prevent breakage and can increase feeling. If you want more lubrication, use water or silicone-based lubricant (read the product label).
- Don't use oil products (e.g., body lotion, petroleum jelly) with a latex condom—it will break.

How do I put on a condom?

1. Check the expiry date (don't use if expired). Squeeze the package to make sure it's sealed—no air should come out.
2. Push the condom to one end of the package. Open carefully at the other end. Don't use scissors, fingernails, or teeth as you might damage the condom (see Figure 1).
3. Pinch the tip of the condom to squeeze out the air (see Figure 2).



Figure 1



Figure 2

4. Put the condom on the end of the hard penis (see Figure 3). If uncircumcised, pull back the foreskin.
5. Unroll the condom all the way down the base of the penis (see Figure 4).
6. After you ejaculate (cum) and the penis is still hard, hold onto the condom and pull out. Make sure to do this before the penis gets soft.
7. Throw the used condom in the garbage—don't flush it down the toilet.



Figure 3

What if a condom breaks?

- If a condom breaks or is left inside the vagina, get **emergency contraception as soon as possible** to help prevent pregnancy. Think about keeping an extra pack of emergency contraceptive pills at home.
- Think about getting tested for STIs.



Figure 4

Did You Know

- You have the right to make the decision to have sex or not.
- Plan ahead and talk to your partner about how to protect yourself and lower your risk of pregnancy, STIs, and HIV. Use a condom every time you have sex.
- Many sexual health clinics offer some types of birth control for no cost for those who qualify.
- Don't use condoms that are lubricated with nonoxynol-9—it can increase the risk of HIV.
- Anyone can buy condoms. Many sexual health clinics give out condoms for no cost.
- Latex condoms may provide better protection than non-latex condoms (e.g., polyurethane) because there's a higher chance of non-latex condoms breaking or slipping off. However, non-latex condoms are still a good option for people who have a latex allergy.

Websites

- ahs.ca/srh
- sexualityandu.ca
- myhealth.alberta.ca
- teachingsexualhealth.ca
- ReadyOrNotAlberta.ca

For 24/7 nurse advice and general health information, call Health Link at 811.