

Condom (Vaginal)

What's a vaginal condom?

- A vaginal condom is a soft, plastic (non-latex) sleeve with two flexible rings, one on each end (see Figure 1). It's sometimes called a female or internal condom. The closed, inner ring goes inside the vagina. The outer ring stays outside the vagina to cover the genitals.
- The vaginal condom is used for vaginal sex. It decreases the risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) by stopping semen and body fluids from passing between partners.



Figure 1

How well does a vaginal 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 vaginal condom is **79%** effective at preventing pregnancy.
- With perfect use (this means you follow the exact directions all the time) a vaginal condom is **95%** effective at preventing pregnancy.
- Condoms used with other forms of birth control give the best protection from pregnancy.
- Vaginal condoms give **good protection** from STIs and HIV.

How do I use a vaginal condom?

- Use a new condom every time you have sex and put it in before any sexual contact. **Never use a male and vaginal condom at the same time** as it increases the risk of both breaking.
- Never reuse condoms. Store condoms at room temperature.
- You can put a vaginal condom in the vagina up to **8 hours** before sex.
- Use a new condom **every time** you have sex. Don't ever reuse a condom.
- A vaginal condom can be used with any type of lubricant.

How do I put a vaginal condom in?

1. Check the expiry date—don't use it if it's expired. Squeeze the package to make sure it's sealed—no air should come out.
2. Rub the outside of the sealed package to spread the lubricant evenly.
3. Open the condom package carefully. It comes with lubricant on it, but you can add more to the inside or outside of the condom or to the penis.

4. Find a comfortable position to put in the condom (e.g., lying down, squatting, or standing with one foot up on a chair).
5. Squeeze the flexible inner ring at the closed end of the condom. Leave the open end hanging down (see Figure 2).
6. With your finger, push the inner ring and sleeve into the vagina as far as it will go (see Figure 3). Once the condom is in place, you shouldn't feel it. The outer ring should be hanging outside the vagina about 2 to 3 cm. It should lie flat over the genitals (see Figure 4).
7. Guide your partner's hard (erect) penis into the condom. Make sure the penis goes **inside** the condom, not beside or under it.
8. After intercourse, take the condom out **before** you stand up. Twist the outer ring to keep the semen (cum) from spilling. Pull the condom out gently.
9. Tie a knot in the end of the condom and throw it in the garbage (don't flush it down the toilet).

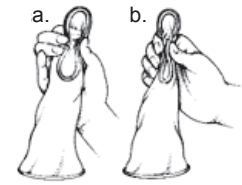


Figure 2

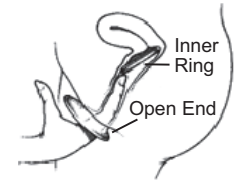


Figure 3



Figure 4

What if a condom breaks?

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

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 people who qualify.
- Don't use condoms that are lubricated with nonoxynol-9 as it can increase the risk of HIV.
- Anyone can buy condoms. Many sexual health clinics give out condoms for no cost.
- A vaginal condom might make noise during sex—this is normal. Using more lubricant may help.

Websites

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

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

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