

Condoms

Everything you ever wanted to know about condoms

Condoms are a form of contraception that provide protection against pregnancy and some STDs. Condoms protect against some STDs by preventing viruses and bacteria from passing from one partner to another. They prevent against pregnancy by blocking the passage of sperm into the female reproductive tract.

Condoms are made of latex, polyurethane, or natural (sheepskin) membranes. LATEX CONDOMS are the most effective type but if you are allergic to latex, POLYURETHANE CONDOMS also protect against the spread of STDs. NATURAL MEMBRANE CONDOMS are porous and therefore not as effective at protecting against STDs. There are many different varieties out there including lubricated, non-lubricated, ribbed condoms, condoms containing spermicide, and many more.

There is also a FEMALE CONDOM available. The female condom is made of polyurethane and is worn by the woman. It is a loose-fitting, soft plastic pouch that lines the vagina with a soft ring at each end. The ring at the closed end is used for insertion and holds the condom in place. The second ring at the open end stays outside of the vagina. The female condom is similar to the male condom in that it should be used only once and then thrown away. For more information on the female condom please speak with a health educator in the Health Promotion department at Student Health Services.

YOU SHOULD NEVER USE THE FEMALE CONDOM AND THE MALE CONDOM TOGETHER.

How effective are Condoms?

Condoms are effective in preventing pregnancy and certain types of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Rates of effectiveness in preventing STDs are determined from those found in pregnancy prevention. Most bacterial infections can be prevented and some viral infections, such as HIV and Hepatitis B, can be prevented by using condoms correctly with every sexual encounter. However, herpes and HPV (genital warts) may not be prevented during condom use if the lesions or sores are not covered by the condom.

Method	Effectiveness for preventing pregnancy & STDs
Condom use plus an extra spermicidal product (used correctly)	97-99%
Condom Only (correctly every time)	98%
Average Condom use*	80-90%

*Clinical studies show that in the general population of condom users, the effectiveness rate is 90% due to condoms being used incorrectly or not being used for every act of intercourse.

How do Condoms prevent STDs and/or pregnancy?

When used correctly, condoms collect the man's sperm and semen (ejaculate) that is emitted before and during ejaculation ("coming") and acts as a barrier to keep the ejaculate out of their partner's body. Latex condoms do not allow viruses, bacteria, or other sexually transmitted diseases to pass through. If herpes or genital wart lesions are not covered by the condom, transmission can still occur.

How to use a Condom

1. To effectively prevent pregnancy and/or STDs, you must use a new condom every time you have intercourse. NEVER RE-USE A CONDOM!
2. When sexually aroused, a man's penis releases drops of fluid before ejaculation that contain sperm and/or infectious organisms. Unroll the condom onto an erect penis before the penis touches the outside or inside of a partner's body. (Before beginning vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse.)
3. Be sure to leave a half-inch "pocket" at the end of the condom (unless it already has a reservoir tip) when you unroll it onto an erect penis. Squeeze the tip of the condom while rolling it on to remove any trapped air. This helps prevent condom breakage by allowing space for collection of the ejaculate.
4. After a man ejaculates ("comes"), either partner should hold the condom onto the base of the penis while the penis is slowly withdrawn. This ensures that the condom is removed at the same time as the penis, preventing spillage. The man should move away from his partner to remove the condom and dispose of it in the trash, not the toilet.

Additional Tips

- NEVER USE Vaseline, mineral oil, massage oil, cold cream, or other oil-based products as lubricants. They weaken the latex and will cause the condom to break and/or disintegrate. If lubrication is desired during intercourse to increase sensitivity, use contraceptive cream, water based lubricant, or silicone based lubricant (i.e., K-Y Jelly or Astroglide).
- If the condom package states that the condom is for novelty use only, (i.e., glow-in-the-dark condoms), DO NOT CONSIDER YOURSELF PROTECTED FROM STDs OR PREGNANCY.
- If the condom breaks or any ejaculate spills during intercourse, the man should pull out immediately. Female partners should insert an applicator-full of contraceptive cream or foam for extra protection against pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases if the breakage or leakage occurred during vaginal intercourse. Female partners can also take emergency contraception pills (i.e. Plan B or "the morning after pill") to prevent pregnancy. Emergency contraception pills (ECPs) can be taken up to 72 hours after unprotected intercourse (a condom break or spill), but are more effective when taken closer to the time the female was exposed to the ejaculate. You can get ECPs at the SDSU pharmacy for a low price, and at many local pharmacies.
- Condoms should be stored in a cool, dry place. Do not store condoms in the glove compartment of a car, or in other places that may accumulate heat. Heat weakens the latex, which makes the condom more likely to break. Condoms are good for two years from the date of manufacture, if they are stored properly. BE SURE TO CHECK THE EXPIRATION DATE ON THE CONDOM PACKAGE. Do not remove the condom from the package until ready for use.
- Condoms may be purchased inexpensively and privately on campus at the pharmacy in SDSU Student Health Services. You may also purchase them from any local grocery or convenience store. You may be eligible to receive free condoms or ECPs through a program called Family PACT, stop by Student Health Services to see if you are eligible for this program.
- Lambskin and/or other animal skin condoms are NOT effective in preventing STDs because of the large pores in the condom, which allow infectious organisms to pass through. In addition, animal skin condoms have higher rates of breakage.

Possible side effects

An allergic reaction to the latex or spermicide (i.e. Nonoxynol-9) used in condoms is a possible side effect. This would manifest itself in a rash, irritation or itching by one or both partners. Try different brands to alleviate the problem. Those individuals can also try non-latex condoms with a water-based lubricant. If the problem persists, consult a health care provider.

REMEMBER: BESIDES ABSTINENCE, CONDOMS PROVIDE THE BEST PROTECTION AGAINST SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES WHEN USED PROPERLY!

For More Information:

Student Health Services	619-594-5281	Facebook/Twitter	Facebook.com/aztehealth &
Health Promotion	619-594-4133		@AZTEHealth
Visit Our Website at	shs.sdsu.edu	American Social Health Association (ASHA)	
		National STD Hotline	800-227-8922