

For oral sex on a male partner (fellatio), use unlubricated condoms. The use of spermicidally lubricated condoms for oral sex is generally not necessary because of the dissatisfying taste of the condom and because it is unlikely to provide better protection than an unlubricated condom. Condoms used for oral sex should only be used once. A different condom should be used if a couple decides to switch from oral sex to vaginal or anal sex.

For oral sex on a female partner (cunnilingus), dental dams or condoms cut to form a barrier may be used. Saran Wrap®, a household plastic product, is approved as a dental dam to reduce the transmission of sexually transmitted infections.

Advantages of Using Condoms

- Condoms allow most men to maintain an erection longer.
- Condoms reduce the risk of accidental pregnancy and STIs. When used in conjunction with a spermicide, condoms provide nearly 100% protection from an accidental pregnancy.
- Using condoms reduces a woman's chance of receiving infections like pelvic inflammatory disease, which can cause infertility. The risk for cervical cancer may also be reduced by the use of condoms during intercourse.
- Condoms are cost effective and easy to use.

Disadvantages of Using Condom

- Some men complain of reduced sensitivity, although this has never been supported by research. Men are encouraged to experiment with different brands of condoms in order to find one they like.

- Occasionally, a man is not able to maintain an erection once he puts the condom on. Using condom application as part of foreplay can assist with this. If the problem continues, condom use may not be possible.
- Some partners of condom users also report reduced pleasure during sex when a condom is used. Couples are encouraged to experiment with different brands in order to try and find one that is mutually pleasing to each partner.
- Some men and women may have an allergy to latex. Approximately 1% to 3% of the general population is latex sensitive. Natural membrane condoms are a viable alternative for those having latex allergies, but only for those who are NOT concerned about STI risk reduction. If you are concerned about STI prevention and have a latex allergy, talk to your health care provider about your alternatives. It may be possible to place a natural membrane condom over a latex condom, but this will depend on which partner has the latex allergy.
- Although the probability is not high, condoms can break. Using additional spermicide can assist in reducing the chances of an accidental pregnancy.

If Your Condom Breaks....

Immediately stop having intercourse and insert spermicide into the vagina. This will start to kill some of the sperm that might have passed into the vagina. You might want to consider getting emergency contraception, or "the morning after pill", which is available by prescription and must be administered within 72 hours following sexual intercourse to prevent an egg from implanting. Call 328-6794 with questions or 328-6841 for an appointment at ECU Student Health Service.

To Contact Us

General Information(252) 328-6841
 Appointments.....(252) 328-6841
 Immunizations.....(252) 328-6841
 Health Education(252) 328-6794
 Pharmacy(252) 328-6793
 Fax (252) 328-4007 or 4397

gotquestions@mail.ecu.edu

Hours of Operation

Fall and Spring

(Effective mid August 2001)

8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m., Monday - Thursday
 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Friday
 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Saturday & Sunday, Urgent Care

Fall and Spring Pharmacy Hours

8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Monday - Thursday
 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Friday

Summer

(Mid May - Mid August)

7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday - Thursday
 7:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Friday

After hours emergencies dial 911

Student Health Service
 East Carolina University
 Greenville, NC 27858

Division of Student Life



The male condom, when used consistently and correctly, is one of the few methods available that reduces the risks of both STIs and unwanted pregnancy. Since HIV/AIDS came to public attention, condom manufacturers have improved condoms to make them more effective as well as appealing. More than 100 different brands of condoms are available in a variety of shapes, colors, sizes, and thickness. Condoms may be made of latex, natural membrane, or polyurethane. Condoms made from the same plastic used in non-allergenic exam gloves, have been recently approved by the FDA and should be available in the future.

How effective are condoms and how do they reduce the risks of pregnancy and sexually transmissible infections (STIs)?

The condom is a barrier method of contraception that prevents or minimizes the exchange of bodily fluids such as semen and vaginal secretions. Condoms also reduce the likelihood of direct skin-to-skin contact with genital lesions. Latex condoms are less effective in reducing the risks for certain STIs such as herpes, genital warts, and other STIs that cause lesions (sores) in the genital area because the condom only covers the erect penis and these infections may occur beyond the area the condom protects. STIs can still be transmitted if lesions are present in these other areas.

The ECU Student Health Service Pharmacy carries male latex and polyurethane condoms, flavored condoms, and female condoms at reduced costs.

Effectiveness

The failure rate for condoms ranges from a perfect user failure rate of 3% to a typical user failure rate of 12%. Perfect use of condoms means using condoms consistently and correctly with every single act of intercourse. A perfect user failure rate of 3% means that if 100 couples used condoms perfectly over the course of one year, three couples would experience an accidental pregnancy. The difference in failure rates between perfect and typical users results from the misuse or nonuse of condoms. It is important to recognize that the typical user failure rate of 12% includes couples who use condoms inconsistently. The perfect user failure rate of condoms can be as low as .01% if additional spermicide is used with a condom. Spermicides that are applied inside the vagina, such as creams, jellies, foams, suppositories, and film, are the best spermicides to use in conjunction with a condom. The benefit of spermicidally lubricated condoms versus regularly lubricated condoms (condoms lubricated with no spermicide) for the prevention of disease is debatable. To increase the chances of using a condom correctly, it is recommended that people become more familiar with condoms by practicing the proper application, before actually using one for sexual activities.

To learn how to properly use a condom, you may make an appointment with a health educator at ECU Student Health by calling 328-6794.

*Source: Hatcher et al. (1998).
Contraceptive Technology. 17th edition.*

Purchasing Guidelines

All condoms sold in the U.S. have to meet the standards put forth by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Some condom manufacturers will surpass these standards. What might be more important than knowing which condom is the “best” is finding a condom that you like and will use consistently and correctly. It seems everyone has their favorite brand of toothpaste or laundry detergent. Condoms are no different. Once couples find a brand that they like, they usually stay with it. Listed below are some tips for purchasing condoms:

- *Always check the expiration date.*
- *For STI protection, select latex or polyurethane condoms. Natural or animal skin condoms do not reduce the risk for STIs.*
- *Condoms may come in different sizes. If the condom does not make any reference to size on the packaging, then it generally fits all sizes.*
- *Select unlubricated condoms (flavored condoms can be used) for oral sex.*
- *For anal and vaginal sex, be sure to select condoms lubricated with a spermicide or lubricated with a water-based lubricant. Some people are allergic to Non-oxynol-9, a commonly found spermicidal lubricant. In the event of an allergy, couples may purchase condoms without spermicide, or talk to their health care provider about purchasing products that contain octoxynol.*
- *In adding lubricant for anal or vaginal sex, be sure to use only water-based lubricants (like K-Y Jelly) with latex condoms. Avoid lubricants containing oils (such as Vaseline, massage oil, baby oil, etc.), as these lubricants will deteriorate the latex of the condom, increasing the probability the condom will break.*
- *Condoms made of polyurethane are available for those who have allergies to latex.*

Condoms can be purchased at any major drug store. The ECU Student Health Service pharmacy sells a variety of condoms at a reduced price.

Using a Condom Correctly

Condoms are relatively simple to use for both vaginal and anal sex. Put the condom on immediately after a man becomes erect, following these basic instructions:

- ⇒ Remove the condom from its individual wrapping, being careful that nails and jewelry do not tear the latex. Do not use teeth or anything sharp to open the package. Do not unroll the condom, but determine which way the condom is to roll down the shaft of the penis.
- ⇒ Pinch about a 1/2 inch at the tip of the condom. While pinching the tip of the condom, place the condom on the tip of the penis and roll it down the shaft with the other hand. The condom must be rolled all the way to the base of the penis. The reason for pinching the tip is to maintain a reservoir tip so the ejaculate has a space for deposit.
- ⇒ As soon as possible after ejaculation, the man must hold the base of the penis and condom and pull out before going soft inside the partner.
- ⇒ To reduce the chance of a condom breaking during anal sex, additional water-based lubricant is generally recommended.
- ⇒ Condoms should also be used for sharing personal sexual equipment,