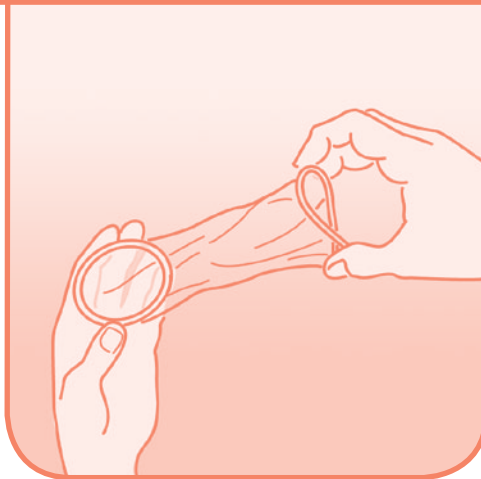


Female Condoms





Female Condoms

General information:

- The female condom is a sheath made of a transparent film with flexible rings at both ends. It is the same length as a male condom.
- Before having sex, place the female condom into your vagina. It fits loosely inside the vagina.
- You must use a new condom for each act of sex.
- Protect against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.
- Preserve feeling of sex for men and women.
- Require partner's cooperation.

Effectiveness for pregnancy prevention: Pregnancy rate in first year of use is:

- Correct use (used with each act of sex) — 5 pregnancies per 100 women (5%)
- Typical use (not used consistently) — 21 pregnancies per 100 women (21%)

How method works:

- Before having sex, place the female condom into your vagina.
- The condom forms a barrier that keeps sperm out of the vagina during sex. This prevents pregnancy.
- The condom covers the cervix inside the vagina. The cervix is a closed space, so the female condom cannot disappear inside the body.
- It also protects you from getting or giving STIs.

Important facts:

- Can be used as a temporary or backup method.
- Can be used without seeing a health provider.
- Can be initiated by the woman.
- Must not be used if the partner is using a male condom. The friction between the two condoms may cause one or both to break.

- May be relatively expensive and hard to find.
- Require you to touch your genitals.
- May make noises during intercourse; adding lubricant can help.
- Can be used during pregnancy to protect mother and fetus against STIs.

Side effects: None

How to use:

- 1) Use a new female condom for each act of sex.
- 2) Check the condom package. Do not use if torn or damaged. Avoid using a condom past the expiration date. Do so only if newer condoms are not available.
- 3) Insert up to 8 hours before sex. For the most protection, insert the condom before the penis comes into contact with the vagina.
- 4) Rub the sides of the female condom together to spread the lubricant evenly and insert:
 - a) Hold the condom with the larger, open end hanging down.
 - b) Choose a position that is comfortable for insertion. You can squat, raise one leg, sit, or lie down.
 - c) Grasp the inner ring at the closed end. Squeeze it so that it becomes long and narrow.
 - d) Find the opening of the vagina and separate outer lips (labia). With the other hand gently push the inner ring into the vagina as far up as it will go.
 - e) Insert a finger into the condom to push it into place. Allow about 2 to 3 cm of the condom and outer ring to remain outside the vagina.
- 5) When you are ready for sex, guide the penis into the condom. Make sure it does not slip outside. If the penis goes outside the condom, withdraw the penis. Help guide it in again.
- 6) If the outer ring is pushed into the vagina or the condom is pulled out of the vagina during sex, put the condom back into place.
- 7) After having sex, remove the condom before standing to prevent leakage of semen. To remove the female condom, grasp the outer ring, twist it to seal in the fluid and gently pull it out of the vagina.
- 8) Place the condom in a tissue or in the empty package. Throw it into the rubbish or latrine. Do not put it into a flush toilet. This can cause problems with plumbing.

Return to the health care facility any time if:

- You have any questions or problems.
- You had unprotected sex in the past 5 days and want to avoid pregnancy. You can take emergency contraceptive pills (ECPs).