
▶ **What is a female condom?**

It is a soft, thin, plastic (polyurethane) tube with a flexible ring at each end. The one ring helps to insert the condom inside the vagina. The other ring is on the outside and covers the vulva to help stop the condom from being pushed into the vagina during sex.

It is the only female-controlled contraceptive method that helps prevent both sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy.

It may be a good option for females who have a latex sensitivity

▶ **What do I need to know about female condoms?**

- You can insert the female condom up to 8 hours before having sex.
- It may be a little awkward to insert the condom the first time but should get easier with practice
- Using lubrication can help to keep the condom in place and reduce friction.

▶ **How effective are condoms?**

Female condoms can help protect against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Some STIs such as herpes or human papilloma virus (HPV/ warts) are passed through skin-to-skin contact. A condom may not provide protection if the virus is in an area not covered by the condom.

▶ **How do I use a female condom?**

- Carefully open the condom package (tear the notched edge at the top of package). Do not use sharp objects to open package.
- Hold the condom at the closed end. Holding the flexible inner ring, squeeze between thumb and index-finger to make it long and narrow.
- Follow product directions to find a position that is comfortable for you to insert the condom (e.g. squat, raise one leg or lie down).
- Carefully and gently insert the ring into the vagina as far as it will go. Be sure the condom is not twisted. The outer ring will be on the outside.
- Be sure the penis enters the condom and doesn't slip down the outside the condom (between the condom and the vagina)
- After sex, carefully remove the condom by twisting the outer ring and gently pulling out.
- Wrap condom in tissue and dispose of in the garbage - do not throw in the toilet.

▶ **What are the advantages of using the female condom?**

- Prevents pregnancy
- Prevents the spread of many STIs
- Available without a prescription
- No hormonal effects
- Can be used by females with latex sensitivities
- Can be used for vaginal and anal sex
- Can be used by breast feeding women
- Does not affect future fertility

▶ **What are the disadvantages of using the female condom?**

- Very obvious during sex (noisy)- can be distracting during sex
- Sometimes hard to insert or use
- Can break or leak
- More expensive than male condoms (about \$4.00 each)

▶ **Resources**

www.sexualityandu.ca

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Who can you talk to if you have more questions?

If you have concerns or questions, call and ask for Sexual Health, or visit the health unit website below.



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DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

Tel: 705-721-7520
Toll free: 1-877-721-7520
www.simcoemuskokahealth.org

Female Condom

