
▶ **What is a male condom?**

It is a protective barrier that fits over an erect penis during oral, vaginal or anal intercourse. The condom collects sperm and protects both partners from bacteria and viruses that can spread sexually transmitted infections (STIs) during intercourse.

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

- Condoms can be made of latex, polyurethane or lambskin. They come in different colours, textures and flavours for oral sex.
- Lambskin condoms do not protect you against STIs.
- Polyurethane condoms can be used if you or your partner has a latex allergy.
- Condoms can be pre-lubricated with a water-based, silicone or spermicidal lubricant.
- If you have a non-lubricated condom and you want more wetness during intercourse use a water-based lubricants such as Astroglide, K-Y, Safer Sex Lube or contraceptive foam or gel. Do not use oil based lubricants like petroleum jelly, baby oil or hand lotion as they can damage the condom.
- Drugs like Monistat or Vagisil (used in the vagina) can also damage a condom.
- Condoms need to be stored in a cool, dry place –away from heat and light.
- Condoms can only be used once.

▶ **How effective are male condoms?**

- If used properly condoms are very good at protecting against most STIs and pregnancy.
- Condoms lubricated with spermicides are more effective and latex condoms without

- A condom may not provide protection of all STIs. Some STIs such as herpes or human papilloma virus (HPV or warts) are passed through skin-to-skin contact.

▶ **How do I use a male condom?**

- Check condom package for expiry date and be sure there are no rips or tears.
- Open package carefully —fingernails, teeth or jewellery can tear a condom.
- Put the condom on as soon as the penis is erect and before it touches the vagina, anus or mouth.
- Pinch the air from the tip of the condom and keep it pinched
- Place condom on the end of the erect penis and unroll it all the way down to the base of the shaft.
- After sexual activity (ejaculation), hold onto the condom at the base of the penis and pull out before the penis gets soft, or the condom may slip off and leak sperm.
- Carefully remove the condom, wrap it in a tissue and throw it in the garbage. Do not flush—it may clog the toilet.

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

- Reduces risk of STIs and pregnancy
- Relatively inexpensive or free from health unit sexual health clinics
- No prescription required
- Small and easy to manage

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

- Penis must be erect before it can be put on
- May break if not used correctly
- Decreased (or perceived decrease) of sensation (sensation may be increased by

using water-based lubricant inside the tip of the condom).

- May cause allergic reactions

▶ **What do I do if the condom breaks or comes off?**

If this happens, and you are worried about getting pregnant, contact the Sexual Health Clinic, your health care provider or a pharmacist about the need for the emergency contraceptive pill (ECP). ECP can be taken up to five days after unprotected sex, but is most effective when used as soon as possible.

If this happens, and you are worried about STIs, get checked out by your health care provider, the Sexual Health Clinic, or local walk-in-clinic.

▶ **Resources**

www.sexualityandu.ca

▶ *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

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www.simcoemuskokahealth.org

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