

Female Condom

What Are They?

The female condom is a plastic pouch that covers the cervix, the vagina, and part of the external genitals. A young woman uses the female condom during intercourse to prevent pregnancy.

How Effective Are They?

If 100 young women used a female condom every time they had sexual intercourse, typically 21 of them would become pregnant. The female condom also effectively prevents many STIs, including HIV, when used correctly every time an adolescent and her partner have sexual intercourse.

How Does the Female Condom Work?

The condom catches the man's sperm so that it doesn't enter the vagina.

Advantages

- * Safe and effective
- * **Doesn't require a prescription or medical examination**
- * Can be inserted up to 8 hours before sexual intercourse
- * Female controlled
- * **Excellent option for someone who does not need ongoing contraception**
- * Can be used with oil-based lubricants and transfers oil-based heat, making it very sensitive
- * Protects against STI/HIV
- * Does not alter vaginal flora and reduces the chance of irritation or allergic reaction

Disadvantages

- * Costs more than the male condom
- * May be noisy or awkward
- * **Requires skills to use properly and negotiate their use with a partner**
- * Sometimes negatively associated with sex workers
- * Is female initiated, but requires cooperation of the male
- * Can be difficult to insert
- * Occasionally a condom may break or slip out during intercourse

Possible Side Effects

Most adolescents have no side effects. Rarely an adolescent may experience:

- * Allergic reaction or irritation

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CLIENT INSTRUCTIONS

Show the client the female condom and explain the following:

How to Use the Female Condom

- * Check the expiration date on the condom package
- * Open the package carefully so the condom doesn't tear
- * Find the inner ring, which is at the closed end of the condom
- * Squeeze the inner ring together
- * Put the inner ring in the vagina
- * Push up into the vagina with a finger, the outer ring stays outside the vagina
- * During sex, guide the penis through the outer ring
- * Remove condom immediately after sex, before you stand up
- * Squeeze and twist the outer ring to keep the sperm inside the pouch
- * Pull the pouch out gently
- * Burn or bury the condom, do not flush it down the toilet

Care of Female Condoms

- * Store condoms in a cool, dry place. Don't carry them near the body because heat can destroy them
- * Use each condom only once
- * Don't use a condom if the package is broken or if the condom is dry or sticky or the color has changed

Possible Side Effects

- * Most adolescents have no side effects
- * Very rarely, an adolescent may experience an allergic reaction or irritation

Reasons to Return to Provider

- * Any time there is a problem (condom breaks or unhappy with method)
- * A resupply of condoms is needed (never run out completely)
- * Either partner thinks s/he may have been exposed to an STI

Have the Client Repeat this Information Back to You and Demonstrate Proper Condom Use