



Women's World
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Support the rubber industry

The key word when it comes to matters of exchanging bodily fluids is safe sex.

WHEN it comes to safe sex, both men and women are responsible for ensuring that they use the right kind of contraception correctly.

Condoms are one of the most common and easy-to-use forms of contraception to protect against unplanned pregnancies and certain sexually transmitted diseases. It is also one of the most affordable and accessible methods as you do not have to go to a clinic or get a prescription.

However, certain myths and misconceptions about condoms prevail, causing some people to avoid using them or use them incorrectly.

For birth control

The condom is really nothing more than a very thin piece of latex or polyurethane that fits over the penis. It blocks semen from entering the vagina, as well as the exchange of bodily fluids that may carry infection.

Condoms – if used consistently and always correctly – have a 98% efficacy in preventing pregnancies. However, the problem lies in the way people use condoms – if condoms are used incorrectly, or not with every sexual intercourse, then “accidents” are bound to occur.

One way to increase the efficacy of condoms is to use contraceptive foams, creams, jellies, films, or suppositories that kill the sperm if the condom breaks. Some condoms are even coated with a spermicide to provide this extra protection.

For protection against STDs

Latex condoms protect against sexually transmitted diseases by blocking bodily fluids that may contain infections. They are known to protect against HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhoea, pelvic inflammatory disease caused by gonorrhoea and chlamydia, syphilis, chancroid and vaginitis caused by trichomoniasis.

Condoms also offer some protection – although not completely –

genital herpes).

Using condoms correctly

Firstly, heed this reminder: a man should always use a condom every time he has any form of sexual intercourse (vaginal, oral or anal). This is unless both partners have confirmed that they are free of any STDs, are monogamous and in a long-term relationship together, and have agreed that unplanned pregnancies will not be a problem.

The condom should be put on before any genital contact, because pre-ejaculation can also cause pregnancy. When unwrapping the condom, be careful not to tear it.

Pinch the air out of the tip with one hand. Then, unroll the condom over the penis and roll it all the way down to the base. Smooth out any air bubbles.

If necessary, apply a water-based lubricant, such as KY Jelly, on the condom. Do not use oil-based lubricants because they can destroy the latex.

One should withdraw immediately after ejaculation. To avoid semen from spilling, hold the condom against the base of the penis while pulling out. Then remove the condom, tie a knot at the top, wrap it in some tissue paper and throw it away in the bin.

If a condom breaks during sex, quickly pull out and replace it. Wash any semen that has leaked out with soap and water. If semen has leaked

● Handle condoms gently and store them in a cool, dry place so they don't break.

● Do not keep condoms for too long in your back pocket, wallet, or car.

● Do not use a condom that is too small or too large for you.

● Do not flush condoms down the toilet.

● Do not use condoms that have passed the expiry date.

● Do not re-use condoms!

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Some common 'complaints' about condoms

● I'm allergic to latex

While it is true that some people are allergic to latex, this should not be an excuse to ignore birth control completely. Try using another type of condom, one that is made from polyurethane (a type of plastic).

● Condoms dull the sensation during sex

Adding a drop of lubricant inside the tip of the condom can help to enhance sensation.

● Condoms interfere with spontaneity

Yes, it may be a little awkward to stop the “action” midway and bring up the subject of birth control. Talk to your partner beforehand about practising safe sex – condoms should become a routine part of your sexual relationship, such that you do not notice any break in your rhythm.

● Condoms always break

This is untrue. Condoms only break



Condoms – if used consistently and always correctly – have a 98% efficacy in preventing pregnancies. - Reuters photo

forget

What's more troublesome than a painful and potentially life-threatening STD? Or an unplanned pregnancy?

The best thing about condoms is that they are cheap and easily available. Use them with some other contraceptive method to ensure better birth control.

Of course, the surest way to avoid transmission of STDs is to abstain from sex, or to stay in a long-term, mutually monogamous relationship

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