



# UNIVERSITY HEALTH CENTER

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## Condoms and Lubricant

Condoms are very effective against sexually transmitted infection transmission during vaginal or anal intercourse. We strongly recommend that condoms always be used with additional lubricant (even if your condom is pre-lubricated), giving about a 99% effectiveness rate against pregnancy, when both are used correctly every time.

### Advantages:

1. Very effective method of birth control and disease prevention. About 90% alone, 99% with additional lubricant when used every time as directed.
2. Latex/Polyurethane condoms are the only contraceptive that gives excellent protection from sexually transmitted infections including HIV.
3. Can be bought without a prescription.
4. Condoms are inexpensive. They are free at the University Health Center and offered at a reduced rate in the UHC Pharmacy.

### Disadvantages:

1. May interfere with spontaneity and sensation, but not as much as is generally thought.
  - a. To aid spontaneity, incorporate use as part of foreplay.
  - b. The slight decrease in sensation may even be an advantage for men who tend to ejaculate prematurely.

2. A skin reaction or allergy to latex rubber.

- a. Alternatives are polyurethane condoms or female condoms.

3. Condoms become much less effective and more likely to fail if they aren't stored, put on, or lubricated properly.

**Remember:** Latex condoms deteriorate if exposed to heat, if wrapper is broken; or if it comes in contact with oils (baby oils, vaseline, hand creams, suntan lotions, vaginal medications, etc.)

**\*For women exposed to unprotected sexual intercourse** (such as a condom breaking), the Emergency Contraceptive Pill (ECP) may be used within 120 hours to decrease the risk of pregnancy. The Emergency Contraceptive Pill (ECP) is available over-the-counter at pharmacies.

### Condom Options

*Latex Condoms for Men.* Latex condoms are made of a particular kind of rubber. Laboratory studies show that intact latex condoms provide a highly effective barrier to sperm and micro-organisms, including HIV and the much smaller Hepatitis B virus. Their effectiveness has been proven over many years.

*Synthetic Condoms.* For people who are allergic to latex, several types of materials are being used to make condoms. One type is polyurethane, a soft plastic.

Lab tests have shown that these materials provide an effective barrier against sperm, bacteria, and viruses such as HIV.

*Polyurethane Condoms for Women.* The female condom fits inside the vagina and covers some of the area outside the vagina. It is also made of polyurethane. When a male condom cannot be used, couples should consider using a female condom.

Unlike latex condoms, synthetic condoms such as male and female polyurethane condoms can be used with either water-based or oil based lubricants. *Lambskin Condoms.* These condoms are made from animal membranes that contain tiny holes. While they can prevent pregnancy, they should **not** be used for STI or HIV prevention because viruses are able to pass through these holes.

*Novelty Condoms.* Novelty (play) condoms are for sexual amusement only. The FDA does not allow them to be labeled as condoms, and they should never be used for STI/HIV or pregnancy prevention.

### Lubricant

Lubricant (water or silicone-based) helps keep condoms strong and skin from tearing during intercourse. This reduces unplanned pregnancy and STI transmission.

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