

Male Condom Use Skills

Male condom: This is a rubber sheath (latex) worn on an erect penis before sexual intercourse to prevent pregnancy and the transmission of STIs and HIV

How to Use the Male Condom

1. Check the expiry date
2. Press the condom packet for air to ensure that the seal is still intact
3. Open packet carefully on the uneven edge. Do not use teeth or sharp objects to open the condom packet
4. Squeeze air out of the tip of the condom
5. Pull back foreskin (if there is one) of erect penis
6. Roll the condom all the way down to the base of the penis (remember not to have your genitals get into contact with any sex fluid)
7. Ensure the condom remains on during sex
8. Withdraw penis from vagina immediately after ejaculation, carefully holding condom at base before loss of erection
9. Roll condom off, tie it taking care not to spill the contents
10. Dispose of the condom by wrapping it in a piece of paper and placing it in a pit latrine or bin (not in the flush toilet)

With practice these steps come naturally make putting on a condom be part of foreplay and enjoy it.

Female Condom Use Skills

Female condom: This is a sheath of thin, soft polyurethane plastic, which is inserted into the vagina to prevent pregnancy, STI and HIV. It is important for a woman to understand the female reproductive organ before using the female condom.

How to Use the Female Condom

1. Carefully tear open the packet along the edge and remove the condom
 - *The sheath has two plastic rings: A smaller loose ring at the closed end and a larger fixed ring at the open end
2. Hold the sheath with the open end hanging down. Squeeze the inner ring between your thumb, index and middle fingers. (Take your time. The female condom may slip through your fingers a few times)
3. Find a comfortable position to insert the condom (squatting, sit with knees apart or stand with one foot on the chair)
4. Guide the sheath into your vagina. Use your other hand to help widen the opening to your vagina
5. Use your index finger to push the ring up inside the vagina. The condom is in place when the inner ring pushes against the cervix
6. The outer ring should lie flat against the opening to your vagina
7. Use your hand to guide your partner's penis into the condom. Make sure the outer ring remains flat against outer vaginal area
 - *Stop! If you feel inner ring being pushed inside or when penis accidentally enters underneath the condom.
8. Remove condom by twisting the outer ring to keep the semen and gently pull out the sheath out of the vagina
9. Dispose by wrapping the condom in paper and throw into a bin or pit latrine(do not throw into a flush)
 - *With practice these steps come naturally make putting on a condom be part of foreplay and enjoy it.

Negotiating for Safer Sex

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Safer Sex: Means preventing infected fluid from entering a partner's body or your body. It ensures that transmission of sexually transmitted infections does not occur.

Steps to Take

- **Talk to Partner:** All women must appreciate the fact that communication is, extremely important in safe sex negotiation. Why?
- **Entry points for Use of Condom:** There are many ways women can use to introduce rationale for use of condoms within a relationships. Start communicating this issue under those conditions you think your husband is most likely to listen. As a woman you can choose the one which suits you situation
 - Recurrence of STIs
 - Family Planning Method
 - Doctor's Prescription
 - Friends who have succumbed to HIV
 - Change of Lifestyle
 - Reduction Cervical Cancer
 - Fear of Potential HIV Infection
- **Agree on the Use of a Condom:** As a couple you need to discuss and agree on using the condom
- **Preparation and Use of Condoms:** Once the couple has made a decision to use the condom within their relationship there are preparatory steps that the woman needs to take to ensure smooth implementation. There is need for physical and mental preparation for the two. The following are:

Feminine Tips

- Be as friendly as you've never been
- Find time to bath especially when you have been working hard
- Prepare your partners favourite dish
- Initiate and allow time for foreplay
- Be responsive during sex

Get information about condoms

- Know the male and female condoms and their brands
- Know where you can buy the condoms
- Know the, cost of the condoms; and know how to use the condoms
- Lubricated condoms are better
- **Make it a Habit:** Once you have managed to get started, make it a habit to do it again and again. Maintain this good sexual lifestyle.
- **It Helps to Share:** With your close friend who can also learn from you and make their first steps to behaviour change.

Negotiation Skills and Assertiveness

Before one decides on the HIV risk reduction behaviour to embark on, they need to have negotiation and assertiveness skills. The following may assist you in acquiring assertiveness skills.

To be **assertive** you need to have the following:

- **Believe** in yourself
- Acknowledge that you have the **strengths**
- Acknowledge that you have the **ability** to do what you want
- A sense of **self worth** as opposed to aggressive behaviour
- Ability to stand for your own rights

Steps to Being More Assertive

1. **Explain your feeling and the problem** e.g I feel as if I'm being used, when we have sex I do not enjoy it
2. **Make your request** e.g I would like it better, when we have sex we both enjoy it
3. **Ask how your partner feels about your request** e.g Is that ok with you?
4. **Answer** e.g Ya, I guess. I'm not too good asking you how you feel, I will try harder.
5. **Accept with thanks** e.g Thanks, Great, I appreciate that.

Practice makes perfect:

- Rehearse the communication process, alone in your mind and make use of the empty chair technique – where you practise talking to an empty chair as if the person you want to communicate with is in the chair.
- Practice prepares one to better handle the task ahead.