

Male Condom Fact Sheet

24-hour Emergency Number/Location

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SOURCES:

Office on Women's Health

- ❖ [Girlshealth.gov: Types of Birth Control](http://girlshealth.gov)
- ❖ [Birth Control Methods: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- ❖ [Unintended Pregnancy Prevention: Contraception](#)
- ❖ [Condom Fact Sheet in Brief](#)



U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C.

How do I get male condoms?

You do not need a prescription to buy condoms. You can buy condoms at many places including pharmacies, grocery stores, and discount stores. Health departments, clinics, and student health centers may offer free or low-cost condoms.

To search for a family planning clinic near you visit <http://www.opaclearinghouse.org/search/>.



What is the male condom?

Sometimes called “rubbers,” a male condom is a thin, protective covering that’s placed over the penis. Condoms prevent pregnancy by keeping sperm from entering a woman’s body.

Condoms made from latex (a man-made type of rubber) are the most common type, but some people get skin irritation from latex. Polyurethane (plastic) condoms are a good choice if latex cannot be used.

Both lubricated and non-lubricated condoms are available. You can also add water-based lubricant (like KY jelly) to a condom to make sex more comfortable but avoid oils and oil-based lotions—these can weaken condoms and can cause them to break.

Used correctly each time you have sex, latex and polyurethane condoms do a good job of preventing pregnancy and many sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Condoms made from natural or lambskin materials also protect against pregnancy, but they won’t protect against STIs.



How do I use it?

- ❖ Put a condom on the erect penis before sex.
- ❖ To keep sperm from spilling, pull the penis out before it gets soft.
- ❖ Hold the condom against the base of the penis when pulling out.
- ❖ Use a new condom each time you have sex.

Condoms can be damaged by heat, so store them somewhere cool and dry. Don’t keep them in a wallet or in a car.

[Click here](#) for more on how to use male condoms the right way.



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How effective are male condoms?

Of 100 couples who use this method each year, from 11-16 will likely get pregnant. You can lower your risk of pregnancy by using male condoms each time you have sex.



Advantages of the male condom

- ❖ You don't need a prescription to buy male condoms.
- ❖ Male condoms are safe and easy to use.
- ❖ Latex and polyurethane condoms offer protection against many STIs.

Drawbacks of the male condom

- ❖ You must use a new condom each time you have sex.
- ❖ Condoms made from latex can cause skin or allergic reactions in some people.
- ❖ A male partner has to agree to use male condoms.



Quick Facts

Effectiveness in Preventing Pregnancy

- ❖ About 11-15 couples out of 100 using this method for one year will get pregnant.

Use

- ❖ Place on the erect penis before any sexual contact occurs.
- ❖ Use water-based lubricants for more comfort.
- ❖ Hold base of condom snugly against the penis when pulling out.

STI Protection

- ❖ Yes (latex and polyurethane condoms only).
- ❖ No (lambskin condoms only)

Clinic Visit Required

- ❖ No



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