

EXTERNAL CONDOM

WHAT IS AN EXTERNAL CONDOM?

External condoms are designed to be worn over a penis. These condoms are available in a variety of sizes, thicknesses, textures, colours and flavours. Most condoms are made of latex, but non-latex condoms are also available.

External condoms should be used correctly and consistently for every sexual act and from beginning to end to prevent most sexually transmitted infections (STI's). It is important to use a new external condom for each act of intercourse. Condoms should always be safely disposed of following sex.

External condoms are readily available without a prescription and may be obtained at no cost at York Region Sexual Health Clinics. Using condoms reduces the risk of most STI's. There is a wide selection of condom-safe lubricants which may help enhance sensitivity and pleasure for both partners during condom use.

HOW IT WORKS

- The condom is worn over the penis during sexual activity. It should be put on before any skin-to-skin genital contact occurs
- The condom acts as a physical barrier preventing direct contact between the penis and the vagina, anus, or oral cavity and it prevents the exchange of bodily fluids
- During intercourse, the external condom traps the semen in the condom so it cannot fertilize an egg, preventing pregnancy

EFFECTIVENESS

If you follow the instructions and use condoms every time you have vaginal, anal, or oral sex, there's very little chance of pregnancy, or getting or giving an STI.

If you use condoms perfectly every single time you have sex, they're 98% effective at preventing pregnancy. Imperfect use is more common, reducing the typical use failure to about 80% effective at preventing pregnancy.

ADVANTAGES

- Latex condoms are relatively inexpensive to purchase and are free at York Region sexual health clinics
- Condoms do not contain hormones like some other birth control methods
- Latex and polyurethane condoms help provide protection against most STI's
- Condoms are widely available without a prescription
- Both partners participate in their use – shared responsibility
- May help the wearer avoid premature ejaculation
- May be used with other contraception methods to increase overall effectiveness

DISADVANTAGES

- A condom may break, tear, or slip off during sexual activity
- Must be on hand at the time of sexual activity
- People with latex allergies or latex sensitivity cannot use latex condoms, but non-latex condoms may be used
- May reduce sensitivity for both partners
- May interfere with maintaining an erection during sexual activity
- Requires participation of both partners
- Must be stored properly – and used before expiration date

Use a condom from beginning to end of all sexual contact to reduce your risk against STI's.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- York Region Public Health Sexual Health Clinics **1-800-361-5653, # 1**
- sexandu.ca