

# INTERNAL CONDOM

## WHAT IS AN INTERNAL CONDOM?

The internal condom may also sometimes be referred to as the “female condom”. It is a barrier method of birth control for persons with a vagina. It can greatly reduce the chance of becoming pregnant or getting sexually transmitted infections (STI’s). It is a soft, loose-fitting polyurethane pouch with two flexible rings.

The internal condom is designed to be inserted into the vagina, or it can be inserted into the rectum and used for preventing STI’s during anal intercourse. Internal condoms may be purchased at most pharmacies.

## HOW IT WORKS

The internal condom prevents contact with body fluids and semen. This type of condom has one smaller loose ring that lies inside the closed end of the pouch to help keep the condom in the vagina or rectum. The other ring rests outside of the body.

## EFFECTIVENESS

It is up to 95 per cent effective in preventing pregnancy. | For every 100 people who use the internal condom, vaginally and according to instructions, up to five people may get pregnant in one year. The internal condom offers protection against some STI transmission when used consistently and correctly.

Condom use (either internal or external) is important when engaging in sexual activity with new/unfamiliar sexual partners, or if you are engaging in sexual activities with multiple sexual partners.

## ADVANTAGES

- It can be used by people who have a sensitivity or allergy to latex because it is made of polyurethane. It is stronger than the latex of the external condom
- It can be used with both oil and water-based lubricants
- It can be inserted up to eight hours in advance, so sex can be spontaneous
- It is not tight on the penis
- A partner does not have to withdraw as soon as they have ejaculated, as the internal condom will stay in place

## DISADVANTAGES

- Must be inserted prior to intercourse
- Requires proper insertion technique
- Flexible inner ring may cause discomfort
- May make noise, slip, or break during intercourse
- May reduce sensitivity for both partners

## HELPFUL INFORMATION

- The internal condom should be inserted before there is any genital contact. You can insert it up to eight hours ahead of time
- Use a new condom with each sexual act
- Do not use it in combination with an external condom as both condoms may not stay in place or they may tear
- If you feel the outer ring being pushed too far into the vagina or rectum, stop, and readjust it
- Be careful the penis does not slip underneath or beside the condom
- When removing the internal condom, rotate the condom before pulling out to decrease spillage of sexual fluids
- Dispose of used condoms in the garbage, not the toilet

Be careful not to tear the condom with rings or fingernails. If a condom breaks, tears, or slips off during sex, STI testing is recommended. You should also consider taking emergency contraception (within 72 hours) if there is risk of pregnancy.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [sexandu.ca](http://sexandu.ca)
- York Region Public Health Sexual Health Clinics **1-800-361-5653, # 1**
- [plannedparenthood.org/learn/birth-control/internal-condom](http://plannedparenthood.org/learn/birth-control/internal-condom)