

# Talking about Condoms

## What is a Condom?

A condom is used as a method of contraception and for protection against Sexually Transmissible Infections (STI's).

A condom is made of a thin sheath of strong latex rubber (closed at one end) which is rolled onto the erect penis before sexual contact.



The first condom is said to have been used in Roman times. It was made of sheep's intestine and was not very satisfactory!!

Modern condoms are made of fine, but strong, latex rubber. Latex is a natural occurring substance obtained from the bark of a rubber tree.

When placed on the men's erect penis, condoms need not reduce the pleasurable sensations of sexual intercourse.

Today, Ansell makes a wide range of condoms that vary in size, shape, colour, texture and lubrication. So, condoms can be used to add variety and fun to sexual activity as well as for protection against pregnancy and STI's.

## How does a Condom work?

A condom covers the penis during sexual contact to form a barrier between the penis and partner's genital area.

When used correctly the condom:

- ? helps prevent pregnancy:-  
by collecting the semen (containing sperm) inside the tip of the condom, to prevent any sperm entering the woman's vagina and uterus (womb).
- ? helps prevent the spread of STI's:-  
by decreasing the amount of skin contact between the penis and partner's genitals, and providing a vessel to encapsulate the exchange of body fluids during sexual contact.

# What are the advantages of Condoms?

Condoms:

- ? Are immediately effective as a contraceptive
- ? Provide protection against STI's
- ? Are easily obtained - no scripts or doctor's visits are necessary
- ? Are easy to carry around
- ? Have almost no side effect (except very rare cases of allergies to latex)
- ? Allow for shared responsibility
- ? Can prolong lovemaking and enhance sexual pleasure

## The myths about Condoms...

**Myth 1** Condoms are difficult to use.

**Fact 1** Condoms are easy to use. Like learning anything new, it takes a little practise to know how. Every packet of Ansell condoms has clear instructions on how to put a condom on. It's a good idea to practise (even on your own) until you get used to it.

**Myth 2** Condoms interrupt lovemaking.

**Fact 2** Putting the condom on can be an enjoyable part of foreplay and mutually pleasurable. For maximum protection, the condom should be put on before the penis comes into contact with the partner's genital area. Open the wrapper of one or two condoms, and have them in a convenient place before lovemaking. Having your partner apply the condom can be a very sensual part of foreplay.

**Myth 3** Condoms restrict the overall enjoyment of lovemaking.

**Fact 3** Ansell condoms are made of very thin (but strong) latex rubber and are specially designed to **enhance sensitivity and sexual pleasure**. Adding a small drop of water based lubricant to the inside tip of the condom before putting it on, (so that the lubricant covers the head of the penis once the condom is in place), can be even more stimulating. It can be mutually enjoyable to add variety to lovemaking by 'trying out' the range of Ansell condoms to decide which types you like best.

**Myth 4**    **Condoms often break during use**

**Fact 4**    **Condoms rarely tear or break** when used correctly (according to instructions of use) and with plenty of water based lubricant (such as Ansell Personal Lubricant).

Remember, no method of contraception is 100% effective.

If a condom should break or slip off during intercourse, consult a doctor as soon as possible about emergency contraception and infection prevention (whether spermicide has been used or not). Emergency contraception can be taken within 72 hours of unprotected intercourse.

### **How to talk to your partner about using Condoms ...**



It's best to talk to your partner before any sexual activity and tell them that you would like to use condoms. This is not always easy when you're first getting to know someone.

Luckily, now it's a lot easier to talk openly about condoms than it used to be. Your partner may want to bring the topic up too, and is wondering how to begin. Talking through the issues will only show that you are a caring, responsible person, and that you want to protect both you and your partner.

It's not only the issue of any unwanted pregnancy. STI's including HIV, can be passed on from just one act of unprotected intercourse. So, it's not worth putting yourself at this risk.

You may find it easier to communicate non verbally.

Put some condoms in a noticeable place, or leave a copy of this brochure where it is easily spotted. This may start the conversation off, or simply indicate to your partner that you want to use condoms.

If you (or your partner) don't want to talk about condoms - just get the condom out.

**BE CLEAR ON WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU.**

You should only participate in low risk sexual activities that you feel comfortable about if your partner does not want to use condoms.

**Low risk “Safer Sex” activities include:**

- ? Kissing
- ? Hugging
- ? Massage
- ? Mutual masturbation
- ? Body to body rubbing

**Where to obtain condoms ..**

Condoms are available at

- ? Chemists
- ? Family Planning Clinics
- ? Supermarkets and convenience stores
- ? Sexual Health clinics
- ? Needle and syringe exchange outlets
- ? Vending machines
- ? Mail order

For more information about condoms contact your local:

- ? Sexual Health and Family Planning Clinic
- ? Doctor
- ? Community Health Centre
- ? Women’s Health Centre