



## EXTERNAL CONDOMS

### What is the external condom?

The external condom is a thin sheath that covers the penis. Most condoms are made of latex, although polyurethane, plastic and lambskin condoms are available. A variety of external condoms is available: plain or reservoir-tipped, dry or lubricated, straight or shaped, smooth or textured, natural or brightly colored and a variety of sizes. Free external condoms are available at the Sexual Health Centre and other community health centers. The external condom is 85-98% effective if used properly.

### Types of external condoms

#### Latex condom

- Most popular
- Protects against sexually transmitted and blood borne infections (STBBIs)
- Can decrease the risk of pregnancy when used in combination with a birth control method

#### Polyurethane condom

- Stronger than the latex condom
- Transmits more body heat, allowing more sensitivity
- Can be used with oil-based lubricants
- Can be used by those who are sensitive or allergic to latex
- More expensive than latex condoms
- Provides protection against STBBIs and pregnancy similar to latex condoms

#### Lambskin condom

- Made from lamb's intestines
- Not recommended for protection against STBBIs
- Can decrease the risk of pregnancy when used in combination with a birth control method

### How does the external condom work?

The external condom acts as a barrier that prevents contact between bodily fluids (semen or vaginal secretions) and the sexual partner. The external condom protects against unintended pregnancy and STBBIs including HIV.

### What can the external condom be used for?

For oral, vaginal and anal sex.

## How do I use the external condom?

1. Check the expiry date.
2. Check the package (It should be sealed and not torn).
3. Put a drop of water-based lubricant or saliva in the tip of the condom for better sensation (oil-based lubricant can only be used with polyurethane condoms).
4. Leave a space at the tip of the condom for semen collection if the condom does not already have a reservoir at the tip.
5. If not circumcised, pull back the foreskin with one hand.
6. Pinch the air out of the tip.
7. Place the rolled condom over the tip of the erect penis.
8. Unroll the condom over the erect penis. Unroll it all the way down to the base of the penis.
9. Smooth out any air bubbles.
10. Apply lubricant outside of condom.
11. Remove the condom immediately after ejaculation (“cumming”). Hold the condom at the base of the penis while pulling out. Pull out before the penis softens.
12. Throw the condom in the trash.
13. Use a new condom every time you have sex or when you are sharing sex toys with your partner(s).

## What are the advantages, possible side effects/problems of the external condom?

### Advantages:

- Easily accessible and affordable.
- It can be used in combination with other methods of birth control.
- Can decrease the risk of pregnancy when used in combination with a birth control method.
- Latex and polyurethane condoms protect against most STBBIs including HIV.

### Possible side effects/problems:

- Allergy to latex causing irritation
- Spermicidal condoms may cause irritation to the genitals
- Slippage or breakage
- Decreased sensation or loss of erection

### Remember:

Any infection in the genital area may increase the risk of becoming infected with HIV. Practicing safer sex, by using latex or polyurethane condoms and/or oral dams for oral, anal or vaginal sex can reduce the risk of STBBIs.

Call the **Sexual Health Infoline Ontario** at 1-800-668-2437 if you have questions or need help.

For more information: [www.sexandu.ca](http://www.sexandu.ca)

**Sexual Health Centre**

179 Clarence St,

Ottawa. ON K1N5P7

613-234-4641 | TTY: 613-580-9656

[OttawaPublicHealth.ca](http://OttawaPublicHealth.ca)