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# Condom How-To's For Better Protection

Use of the male latex condom can reduce (though not eliminate) the risk of spreading STDs.

Using male condoms seems pretty easy, too. But condoms don't work unless you use them - correctly - every time you have sex. All it takes is one unprotected act of intercourse to infect your partner with an STD, which you may not even know you have.

So, again: Use a new latex condom every time you have sex.

Studies show that this isn't happening. According to the Minnesota Student Survey, a health and safety questionnaire administered every three years to teenage students, only 66 percent of male 12th graders and 59 percent of female 12th graders used a condom the last time they had intercourse.

Similarly, if condoms are not used correctly every time, the protective effect may be reduced. Using the condom incorrectly can lead to breakage, slippage, or leakage. The most common mistakes are:

Putting the condom on after sexual activity has started  
Putting the condom on incorrectly  
Failing to withdraw the penis while it is still erect

If you're using a latex condom every time, great. But to be sure you're getting the most possible protection from condoms, carefully read these instructions the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Use a new condom for every act of vaginal, anal and oral sex-throughout the entire sex act (from start to finish). Before any genital contact, put the condom on the tip of the erect penis with the rolled side out. If the condom does not have a reservoir tip, pinch the tip enough to leave a half-inch space for semen to collect. Holding the tip, unroll the condom all the way to the base of the erect penis. After ejaculation and before the penis gets soft, grip the rim of the condom and carefully withdraw. Then gently pull the condom off the penis, making sure that semen doesn't spill out. Wrap the condom in a tissue and throw it in the trash where others won't handle it. If you feel the condom break at any point during sexual activity, stop immediately, withdraw, remove the broken condom, and put on a new condom. Ensure that adequate lubrication is used during vaginal and anal sex, which might require water-based lubricants such as K-Y Jelly™, Astroglide™, AquaLube™, and glycerin. Oil-based lubricants (e.g., petroleum jelly, shortening, mineral oil, massage oils, body lotions, and cooking oil) should not be used because they can weaken latex, causing breakage.

If you have frequent yeast infections, use a water-based lubricant, such as System JO, that does not contain glycogen. Glycogen promotes yeast infections.

Using a condom correctly and consistently shows that you respect yourself and your partner. Free [Medical Advice](#) published By [Dr. Vivienne Balonwu](#).

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