

# Cervical Cap

## What is the cervical cap?

The cervical cap is a thimble-shaped cap made of silicone that fits over the cervix (the opening to the uterus). It is a barrier-method of birth control that must be used with spermicide cream or jelly. A health care provider will determine the size needed and write a prescription for the cervical cap. In Canada, the only cervical cap available is called FemCap. It comes in three sizes and can be purchased online.

### How it works

- The cervical cap fits snugly over the cervix and helps prevent sperm from entering the cervix.
- The spermicidal cream or jelly kills sperm on contact.
- The cap can be inserted up to six hours before intercourse and left in place for at least eight hours afterwards.
- Have abnormal pap test (cervical cytology) results
- Have trouble inserting the cap properly
- Have chronic inflammation of the cervix or recurrent infection in the fallopian tubes
- Currently have a vaginal infection

### Effectiveness

The cervical cap is up to 91 per cent effective in preventing pregnancy in women who have never had children and up to 71 per cent effective in women who have had children.

You may not be able to use the cervical cap if you:

- Or your partner has allergies or sensitivities to spermicide
- Have structural abnormalities of the vagina or cervix
- Reversible form of birth control
- Does not cause any change in your body
- Provides some protection against sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Only used when needed
- Cannot be felt by you or your partner
- Sex is not interrupted
- Partner not needed for insertion
- Only needs to be replaced every one to two years

### Advantages

**1-800-361-5653**  
TTY: **1-866-252-9933**



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## Disadvantages

- Spermicidal cream may cause irritation of the vaginal walls and increase the risks of contracting human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
  - It cannot be used by people who are allergic to spermicides.
  - You need to feel comfortable inserting the cap into your vagina.
  - It must be fitted by a skilled clinician.
  - It needs to be cleaned after each use.
  - If left in the vagina longer than the recommended time, symptoms of toxic shock syndrome may occur.
  - It cannot be used during your period.
  - It needs to be refitted if you gain or lose more than 10 pounds or after pregnancy, miscarriage or abortion.
8. To remove the cap, tilt the cap to one side with your index finger and hook your middle finger under the rim. Then pull the cap outward and downward to remove.
  9. Wash the cap with mild soap and warm water. Allow it to air dry. Do not use any powder as it can cause infection.
  10. Check for holes after each use by holding the cap up to the light.
  11. If lubricant is required, use a water-based product. Do not use the cap with oil based products such as petroleum jelly (Vaseline).

If the cervical cap is dislodged during or soon after intercourse, call a York Region sexual health clinic, a health care provider or go to a walk-in clinic or pharmacy to discuss if emergency contraception is required.

The cervical cap does not protect you from STIs. Always use a condom from beginning to end of all sexual contact to reduce your risk.

## Instructions for use

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Put ¼ teaspoon of spermicide in the dome of the cervical cap and spread a thin layer on the brim.
3. Put ½ teaspoon in the folded area between the brim and the dome.
4. Separate the labia (lips of vagina) with one hand.
5. Squeeze the rim of the cap together with thumb and index finger of one hand and insert the cap into the vagina. Push it as far back as it will go.
6. Use your index finger to press the rim around the cervix. Press on the dome to create suction and adjust the cap to make sure the cervix is completely covered.
7. Insert the cervical cap up to six hours prior to intercourse and leave it in place for eight hours after the last act of intercourse. Do not leave in for more than 48 hours.



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