Female Condom

What is the female condom?

The female condom is a barrier method of birth control for use by females. It can greatly reduce the chance of becoming pregnant or getting sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The female condom is designed to be inserted into your vagina. It is a soft, loose-fitting polyurethane pouch with two flexible rings. It can also be used for anal intercourse.

How it works
Like the male condom, the female condom prevents contact with body fluids and sperm. The female condom has one loose ring that lies inside the closed end of the pouch that helps keep the condom in the vagina. The other ring rests outside the vagina.

Effectiveness
It is up to 95 per cent effective in preventing pregnancy and offers protection against STI transmission when used consistently and correctly. In other words, of 100 women who use the female condom according to instructions, up to five women may get pregnant in one year.

Advantages
• It can be used by people who have a sensitivity or allergy to latex.
• It is stronger than the latex of the male condom.
• It can be inserted up to eight hours before, so sex can be spontaneous.
• You can still urinate with the female condom inside of you.
• It may provide better STI protection than the male condom because the outer ring covers both the labia and the base of the penis.
• It is not tight on the penis. Your partner does not have to withdraw as soon as he has ejaculated, as the female condom will stay in place.
• It can be used with both oil and water-based lubricants.

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 either partner
Instructions for use:
The female 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 a male condom as both condoms may not stay in place or they may tear.
- Add extra lubricant inside the condom if it slips up and down in the vagina.
- If you feel the outer ring being pushed into the vagina, stop and readjust it.
- Be careful that the penis does not slip underneath or beside the condom.
- When removing the female condom, rotate the condom before pulling out to decrease spillage.
- Dispose of used condom 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 emergency contraception (within 120 hours) if there is risk of pregnancy.

1. Find a comfortable position.
2. Be sure the inner ring is at the closed end of the condom.
3. Hold the condom with the open-end hanging down.
4. Squeeze the inner ring with your thumb and middle finger. Place your index finger between the thumb and middle finger and keep squeezing the inner ring.
5. With the other hand, spread the lips of your vagina.
6. Insert the squeezed inner ring and the pouch of the condom into the vagina.
7. With your index finger, push the inner ring and the condom the rest of the way into the vagina as far as it will go, leaving approximately one inch outside your body.
8. Make sure the condom is inserted straight, not twisted and that the outside ring lies against the outer lips of the vagina.