



Preventing Chlamydia Infection

There are a few easy steps to prevent Chlamydia infection. You could, of course, avoid sexual contact that involves penetration or oral sex. Or else, you should

1. Use condoms and dams
2. Get tested regularly

1. Use condoms and dams

Condoms are extremely effective at preventing the transmission of Chlamydia from one sexual partner to another. Condoms not only reduce the spread of Chlamydia, they also reduce the spread of most other STIs as well as reduce the risk of pregnancy!

The most common sort available is male condom. The male condom goes on a man's penis before intercourse or oral sex. They provide a barrier between a man's urethra and his partner's cervix (if female) or rectum (if male or female) or between the mouth and genitals during oral sex. Less commonly used is the female condom, which is a thin, soft, loose-fitting pouch that is inserted into her vagina before intercourse. Either one will provide a barrier to stop the Chlamydia bacteria travelling from one person to the other, although the male condom is the cheaper and easier to use option.

Male and female condoms: how do they compare?

	Male condom	Female Condom
What's good about them?	Reduces the spread of STIs Reduce the risk of pregnancy Widely available (can be bought in many places) Relatively cheap Easy to carry eg in your wallet, pocket, car etc	Reduces the spread of STIs Reduces the risk of pregnancy Can be put in place up to 8hrs before intercourse Important if your male partner refuses to use condoms
What else should I know?	They can expire They can break	More difficult to use at first Slightly more expensive They can expire or break

Dams are sheets of thin latex used over a woman's genitals during oral sex. Dams act as a barrier to bacteria between her genitals and her partner's mouth.

There are no age restrictions on who can buy condoms and dams. Condoms can be used on penises, and also on vibrators and other sex toys, to prevent the spread of infections.

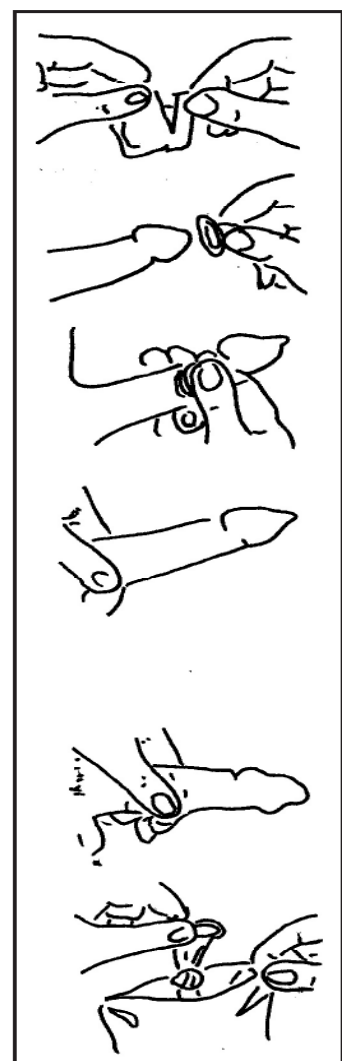
Tips for using the male condom

- Check the expiry date on the packet first (the latex in condoms wears out)
- Don't use a condom that has been left for hours in direct sunlight or extreme heat (this weakens the latex and makes the condom more likely to break)
- When putting a condom on, gently squeeze the tip of the condom so that it doesn't fill with air
- Wait until the penis is fully erect before putting the condom on
- Use plenty of water-based lubricant – you can put this all over the condom before penetration
- Don't leave the penis inside your partner until it has become completely soft again – it should be withdrawn while the penis is still quite hard to prevent leakage of semen from around the condom
- Hold onto the bottom of the condom when removing it to avoid spillage
- Use a condom only once and then discard it
- Practise using condoms before having sex if you're not sure how to use them!

****Remember to use condoms EVERY time you have sexual contact with someone****

Diagram adapted with permission from Family Planning NSW

<http://www.fpnsw.org.au/sex-matters/factsheets/23.html>



2. Get tested regularly

Another way to prevent the spread of Chlamydia is for sexually active young people to be tested for Chlamydia regularly. Sexual health experts recommend that sexually active young people have a Chlamydia test about once a year even if they have no symptoms. If you are changing partners regularly, it's a good idea to get yourself checked out more often. Chlamydia testing and treatment can be done confidentially.