

SPOTLIGHT ON... CONDOMS

Key information for educators to support young people with using condoms

This session will explore what condoms do, how to use them correctly and how to challenge some barriers to using condoms. It would be helpful to present a visual demonstration of how to use to a condom correctly. If you do not have a condom demonstrator, you can use any similar shaped object. Be mindful that young people may perceive the size of the demonstrator/object you use to be an accurate reflection so its important to explore that penis's come in different sizes and shapes.

Condoms as a barrier method to prevent pregnancy and help prevent [Sexually Transmitted Infections \(STIs\)](#) from being passed from one person to another. Although they are not 100% guaranteed, when used correctly condoms are extremely effective which means knowing how to use a condom correctly is important. Young people should be encouraged to practice using condoms on their own and finding which condom best suits them before becoming sexually active, as familiarising use of condoms will help to improve self efficacy. Regardless of gender, everyone should know how to use condoms.

How to use external condoms (including video) and Top tips for Success with condoms can be found www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk/condoms.

Activities

• **Activity 1: External Condom Check List—Number the steps in order**

Students are given the External Condom Check List Activity where the steps for using a external condom correctly have been jumbled up. Ask the students to number the steps in the order in which they believe to be correct. The facilitator can use the answer sheet and facilitator notes to discuss the steps in the correct order.

Use a condom demonstrator to show the correct way to use a condom. This this opportunity as a discussion to use the top tips and show the video if needed.

• **Activity 2: Excuses and Condoms**



Students are given condom use excuses and possible responses. Ask the student's to match them to which is the most appropriate. The students may wish to discuss other excuses and responses they may have heard. The facilitator can use the answer sheets to discuss excuses and possible responses with the group.

Facilitator Notes

Condoms as a barrier method to prevent pregnancy and stopping most STIs from being passed from an infected partner to another. Although they are not 100% guaranteed, when used correctly condoms are extremely effective. Knowing how to use a condom correctly is important. Young people should be encouraged to practice using condoms before becoming sexually active, as familiarising use of condoms will help to increase self efficacy. It is also important to have communication regarding condom use.

The second activity looks at communication in more depth. Discuss with the group that being able to talk to a partner about using condoms is helping them both have safer sex. Stress that it is both people's responsibility to ensure that condoms are used.

Things to remember

- External, internal and non-latex condoms are available. Condoms come in a variety of sizes, fit and texture. Check out the Pasante size and shape guide at www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk/condoms
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- Condoms are available free to 13 to 24 year olds through the Get it on Condom Scheme www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk/getiton
- Check condoms for quality markers (British Kite mark and the EC mark.)   These are indicators that a selection of condoms from that batch has been tested for durability.
- Check the condom for an expiry date as they will dry out and become brittle. Important to store the condom in a cool and dry place, not in warm spaces such as pocket or wallet for a long period of time.
- Check that the condom is not damaged by squeezing the packet to see if any air escapes. If air does escape this means that the packet is damaged therefore the condom itself may be damaged and should be discarded.
- The condom should be pushed to one side of the packet to avoid damage during opening. Open using the perforated edge of the condom packet; do not use teeth or scissors, these can damage the condom.

Facilitator Notes Continued...

- Advise the group that they should wash their hands before touching a condom. It is important that no oil based products come in contact with the condom. Examples of oil based product are makeup, lipstick, hair products, moisturiser, hand cream, coco butter, Vaseline, massage oil and cooking oils. (This is not an exhaustive list). These damage the condom and can make it less effective.
- Once the condom has been removed from the packet, ensure it is the correct way round. This can be ascertained by looking at the way the condom is rolled. If the condom is placed onto a penis the wrong way round it should be discarded rather than turned over and used. This is because any viruses or bacteria that are on the head of the penis or sex toy will be on the side of the condom that is going to be in contact with someone.
- The condom should be free from air before it is placed on the penis or sex toy. Air trapped in the tip of a condom is one of the main reasons for condom failure. Ensure that the tip of the condom remains pinched as the condom is rolled down. There needs to be sufficient room at the end of the condom to accept the ejaculate if the condom is being used on a penis.
- Once sex is finished, remove the condom away the partner to avoid the chance of 'spillage'. Wrap the used condom in a tissue and dispose of in a bin. Do not flush down the toilet as it will block the toilet up.
- It is also worth mentioning that you should only use a condom once and should not use two condoms at the same time "double bagging" as this will cause friction between the two condoms and cause them to be more likely to break.
- A video for how to use a condom is available on www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk/condoms
- Reiterate that even if we have condoms and know how to use them, it is essential to communicate with partners to facilitate consensual and safer sex. This is a positive way to help reduce the risk of unplanned pregnancy and the transmission of sexually transmitted infections. The next activity focus's on communication regarding condom use.

Activity 1: External Condom Check List – number the steps in order

Obtain condom, check British Kitemark and/or CE mark, condition of condom, expiry date and store correctly	
Check that no air is trapped and there is sufficient room at the end	
Check the condom is the right way round and not inside out	
Withdraw penis from partner, holding condom on at the base, remove condom carefully and dispose of in a bin	
Ensure condom is rolled down as far as it will go	
Check there is air in packet and that it is not damaged	
Pinch tip to expel air	
Wash Hands	
Hold tip while rolling down condom on erect penis	
Push condom over to one side and open packet from perforated edge, being careful not to damage condom	

Activity 1 Answers: External Condom Check List– number the steps in order

Obtain condom, check British Kitemark and/or CE mark, condition of condom, expiry date and store correctly	1
Check that no air is trapped and there is sufficient room at the end	9
Check the condom is the right way round and not inside out	5
Withdraw penis from partner, holding condom on at the base, remove condom carefully and dispose of in a bin	10
Ensure condom is rolled down as far as it will go	8
Check there is air in packet and that it is not damaged	3
Pinch tip to expel air	6
Wash Hands	2
Hold tip while rolling down condom on erect penis	7
Push condom over to one side and open packet from perforated edge, being careful not to damage condom	4

Activity 2: Condom Excuses– Match the excuse with the comeback

I can't use condoms because I have latex allergies.

I'm on the pill, so we don't need to use any other form of contraception.

I haven't started my periods yet, so it will be OK to do it without a condom, won't it?

You may not need to use any other form of contraception, though contraception alone will not protect you from STIs. When used correctly, condoms will protect you from pregnancy and STIs.

You can get pregnant before you get your first period. Getting pregnant is related to ovulation. Because you can ovulate before having your first period, it is possible to become pregnant if you have sex.

Latex Free Condoms– always a good idea to practice using condoms to ensure you can use them effectively and to check if you have a latex reaction/allergy. Check if your partner has a latex allergy before using condoms in sexual activity.

Activity 2 Answers : Condom Excuses– Match the excuse with the comeback

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Activity 2: Condom Excuses– Match the excuse with the comeback

What do you mean you won't have sex with me if we don't use a condom. If you really loved me you would!

Don't worry I can pull out before I come.
Trust me.

I have drunk so much I wouldn't be able to put it on.

Pulling out is not a method of contraception. Penises will have pre-cum on the tip , therefore you at risk of pregnancy and STIs.

Drinking can impair your ability to communicate effectively. Every participant in sexual activity must be capable of giving their consent, if someone is too drunk then they're incapable of giving this. Also drinking large amounts of alcohol can make it difficult to get or keep an erection.

Communication and being able to inform your partner of what you want is really important when engaging in sexual activity, as is taking responsibility for yourself and not being pressured into anything. Remember condoms will protect you from pregnancy and STIs.

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Activity 2: Condom Excuses– Match the excuse with the comeback

There's no point in using condoms – they don't work anyway!

Practise putting on a condom when you're not about to have sex with someone. Try masturbating with a condom on, this way you'll feel confident about staying erect next time you have sex.

I can't carry condoms, they will think all I'm interested in is having sex with them

Condoms are great at preventing both pregnancy and STIs. If you follow the instructions and use a new condom every time you have vaginal, anal, or oral sex, there's very little chance of pregnancy, or getting or giving an STI

Condoms make me lose my erection

Carrying condoms shows that you are taking responsibility for yourself. Just because you carry them doesn't mean you are expecting to have sex. Always communicate and get enthusiastic consent from your partner before engaging in any sexual activity.

What excuses can you think of? What would be a good 'comeback'?

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Spotlight...Condoms

- ♦ Condoms act as a barrier method to prevent pregnancy and stopping most Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) from being passed from an infected partner to another.
- ♦ Although they are not 100% guaranteed, when used correctly condoms are extremely effective.
- ♦ Use a new condom every time you have vaginal, anal or oral sex. Condoms come in different shapes, sizes and textures so it is important to find one that suits you.



External Condoms go over a Penis or Sex Toy

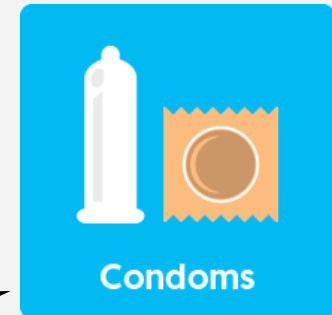


Internal Condoms are inserted inside the Vagina



Find Out More:

www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk/getiton



FREE

You can get Free condoms from Pharmacies, GPs, Young People's Services through the 'Get it On Condom-Card' scheme. Or visit your local sexual health clinic.