

SaferSex4Seniors

Information you need to enjoy safer sexual pleasure!

5 Ways to Overcome Condom Challenges

1. I can't maintain an erection without a condom. A condom makes it virtually impossible!

That's an experience a lot of older men have. Try asking your partner to put the condom on you, slow and sexy. Decades ago, this might have caused you to come too fast; today, you can have some fun with it! Experiment with different types of condoms – one that feels a bit tight around the base of your penis may help you stay hard even longer. Once the condom is on, you can try placing a sex toy called a “penis ring” or “cock ring” at the base of your penis to help maintain firmness. Another option? You might want to consider having your partner use a female condom.

2. We used them for our first few months together, but we don't need them anymore, right?

It's wonderful to be in a relationship in which you feel like you can trust your partner. But we all know someone who has had a partner step out on them, even though they were sure the relationship was monogamous. Ask yourself, “Am I willing to trust this person with my health, with my life?” That's what we all do every time we have sex without using a condom! It's also important to get tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs,) including HIV, prior to having sex with a new partner, and again later, if you or your partner have sex outside your relationship.

3. I can't get a woman pregnant anymore, so why do I need to use condoms?

Throughout their lives, men continue to produce sperm and can still impregnate a woman who has not completed menopause. And even if your female partner is someone who no longer can become pregnant, you could catch an infection from her, or you could have an infection without knowing it and pass it on to a partner. Do you dislike condoms so much that you're willing to get an infection that could change your life forever? If not, use condoms.

4. I've been in a monogamous relationship for 30 years. Why should I worry about condoms?

If you and your partner have both been tested for STIs, and your relationship is truly monogamous, you don't have to worry about using condoms. If either one of you has sex with another partner, in the open or in secret, condoms should be used every time with that other partner and with your primary partner.

5. How do I insert and use the female condom? It looks uncomfortable!

Some of us remember using diaphragms for contraception; the female condom is inserted very much the same way. They look like large condoms with a removable ring inside and an external ring attached to the opening. They are generally made of nitrile – synthetic latex – or polyurethane, great for anyone with a latex allergy. (Newer versions could be made of different material, so if you have a latex allergy, check!) The internal ring holds it in place in the vagina. The outer ring sits outside the opening to the vagina. Guide the penis into the opening so it doesn't accidentally slide up the outside of the condom. It can be inserted up to 8 hours before sex – very convenient! Lots of men like them because they free them from having to wear a condom. Lots of women like them because they put them in control of their health!

*** Never use two condoms at the same time; doing so increases the risk of condom breakage. ***

Author bio: Joan Garrity has spent 30+ years nurturing the ability of healthcare and social service providers to be more effective in addressing sexuality issues with clients, young and old. Her workshops provide concrete strategies participants can immediately apply to their work. Joan is on the Board of OWEL – Older Women Embracing Life – a network of senior women providing support and health-related education to women and their families infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Learn more about Joan at <http://www.joangarrity.com> Copyright 2012©by Joan Garrity