

# SaferSex4Seniors

Information you need to enjoy safer sexual pleasure!

## Choosing and Using Condoms

If you're sexually active, you need to be concerned about Chlamydia, gonorrhea, HPV, herpes, and HIV. These sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are just as likely to occur in older people as in younger ones.

Condoms aren't a 100% magical answer for the prevention of sexually transmitted infections, but they are the best protection we have today. Use condoms with a new partner until you've decided to have sex with each other exclusively. Then it's fine to get rid of the condoms once you've both been tested for STIs.

Condoms come in a variety of sizes and shapes, which wasn't the case when today's seniors were young. It can be helpful for any man, regardless of his age, to experiment with different kinds of condoms. That way, he can settle on one or two brands that fit best and feel right.

For women, condoms can dry out intercourse, so be sure you've got condom-safe lube to help ease things along. The way you'll know a lube is condom safe is if it says so on the box. If you prefer oil-based lubes (sex lube or vegetable oil, Crisco®, butter or petroleum jelly), only use condoms made of polyurethane (like Trojan Supra®), or try non-latex female condoms.

### Female Condoms

Female condoms are tubes made of polyurethane, nitrile or latex with a flexible ring inside the closed end. A woman pushes the closed end toward the back of her vagina, near where a diaphragm used to go but without the need to seat the ring around the cervix. The open end of the condom is held in place by a larger flexible ring outside the vagina. That's the part the penis goes through. They are pre-lubricated; if you need additional lube, check the condom box for recommendations. Some couples say female condoms allow greater sensation than male condoms. They also give women more control over their own health.



### Plastic Wrap for Oral Sex



Dental dams are often recommended by safer-sex advocates for oral sex with a woman. They are sold online but can be hard to find in

retail stores, and they can be difficult to use. For this reason, people using barriers for oral sex sometimes prefer plastic wrap. Cut a section large enough to cover the entire genital area. Try putting a dab of sex lube on the side of the plastic that sits against the clitoris to help increase sensations. Either partner can hold the barrier in place. If saliva is used instead of sex lube, make sure it's the woman's own saliva, to prevent transmission of STIs.

Dams and plastic wrap can also be used for oral-anal contact, called rimming. Never flip a barrier over, once one side has touched the genitals or anus. If necessary, use a new barrier.

### Condoms for Oral Sex

If you are trying to avoid getting an STI in your throat, or if you don't like semen in your mouth, put a condom on a man's penis before giving him oral sex. There are flavored condoms for this very purpose; some taste better than others. Non-latex, non-lubricated condoms have no taste or artificial odor.

## **Erection Issues**

If a man is not able to get or keep an erection, it doesn't mean he's not sexually aroused. For a man who is older, erection problems are often the result of circulatory problems. If a man is experiencing erection problems and there are no explanations for it (such as stress or anxiety), it is important for him to get a full exam from a physician. A sex therapist may be able to help address emotional issues.

If the usual drugs for erectile dysfunction (ED) don't help, the man should consult with a urologist. When all else fails, it is possible a cock ring or a vacuum pump with a cock ring might allow him to get enough of an erection to put on a condom and have intercourse.

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