FACT SHEET: EXTERNAL CONDOM

Remember, the **condom protects you from Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV.** Always use condoms to protect yourself!

HOW DOES A CONDOM WORK?

- A condom covers the penis during sex. It blocks sperm from reaching the egg. If sperm do not reach the egg, pregnancy cannot happen.
- No method of birth control is 100% effective. 13 in 100 people using the external condom for a year get pregnant.

WHEN DO I USE A CONDOM?

- Make sure that the condom has not expired.
- Open the wrapper with care so you don't damage the condom. Don't use your teeth or scissors.
- Put on a condom when the penis is erect.
- Use a new condom each time you have sex.

HOW DO I USE A CONDOM?

- Pull back the foreskin. (Skip this step if there is no foreskin.)
- Place the rolled condom over the tip of the hard penis.
- Pinch the tip of the condom so it looks like a little hat. Leave a half-inch space between the tip of the condom and the tip of the penis.
- Roll the condom all the way down to the base of the penis and smooth out any air bubbles.
- The condom should roll down easily. If it does not roll down easily, you may have placed the condom inside-out. Do NOT flip it over and reuse it. Instead, use a new condom.

HOW DO I REMOVE A CONDOM AFTER SEX?

- Hold the condom against the base of the penis as you withdraw the penis from the vagina.
- Remove the condom from the penis and throw it in the garbage.

WHAT IF I STOPPED USING CONDOMS AND HAD UNPROTECTED SEX? WHAT IF THE CONDOM BREAKS?

- You can take Emergency Contraception (EC) **right away**. EC can prevent pregnancy up to 5 days after sex, and it works better the sooner you take it.

WHAT DO PEOPLE LIKE ABOUT CONDOMS?

- Condoms are a safe and effective birth control method.
- Easy to use.
- Easy to get.
- Can be put on as part of sex play.
- Can be used for oral, vaginal, and anal sex.
- Can help relieve early ejaculation.
- Protects against HIV and many other sexually transmitted infections.

HOW WILL THE CONDOM AFFECT ME?

- Most people don't have any problems using condoms.
- Condoms may decrease penile sensation and break or slip off.
- You can add lube to the outside of the condom after it is on the penis to make sex feel even better and to prevent condoms from breaking.
- It can take some practice to know how to use a condom correctly.

WHERE CAN I GET CONDOMS?

- You can get condoms from drugstores, pharmacies, health centers, supermarkets, convenience stores, and online.
- You do not need a prescription.
- Many organizations, health departments, and other advocacy groups offer free condoms to get in person or by mail.

ARE CONDOMS SAFE?

- Condoms are very safe. There are no serious problems when using condoms. If you or your partner are allergic to latex, use polyurethane condoms.