



# THE FEMALE CONDOM

We have heard a lot about male condoms. Less well known are female condoms for use by women. Presently, they are available through a few pharmacies in large Indian cities, and through online shopping sites.

Female condoms are linings or sheaths made of a thin plastic material called polyurethane. These can also be made of another material called nitrile. Just like the male condom, one end of the female condom is closed, and the other end is open. These condoms have rings attached at both ends. The ring at the closed end helps the condom to be inserted inside the vagina and the ring at the open end holds the condom outside of the vagina.

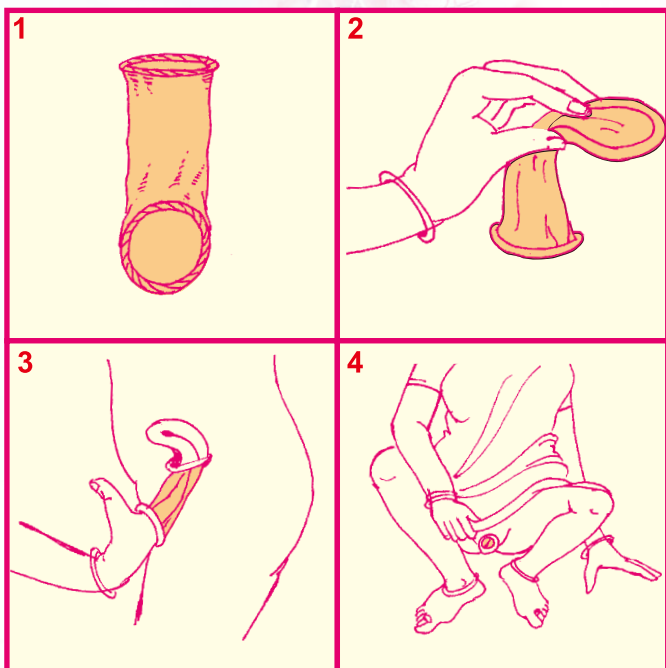
Like the male condom, the female condom can be used to delay the first pregnancy or give adequate space between pregnancies. In addition, the female condom, like the male condom, prevents the spread of sexually transmitted infections including HIV.

## How does it work?

During a sexual intercourse, the man's penis will get into the female condom. The condom acts as a barrier to semen entering the female reproductive tract.

## How to insert it

- The female condom can be inserted much earlier before intercourse. Care has to be taken that it is inserted before the man's penis comes into contact with the vagina.
- Remove the condom from its cover. Sit, squat or lie down comfortably. As shown in the picture, firmly press and hold the closed end of the condom alongside the ring with the index and thumb finger and slowly insert it inside the vagina. Once inside the vagina, push it further using the index finger as far as it will go. Take care not to tear or scratch the condom during insertion.
- The ring on the open end will remain at the vaginal opening.
- During intercourse, take care that the man's penis is inserted inside the female condom.
- After intercourse, twist the outer ring of the female condom to close it and avoid spillage of semen and then remove it from the vagina.



## Benefits

- This is a barrier method that prevents the semen from entering the vagina.
- Female condom is the only method that is under the woman's control and prevents transmission of sexually transmitted infections. However, it needs the partner's cooperation for use.
- It provides the twin benefit of preventing pregnancy as well as transmission of sexually transmitted infections including HIV.
- Since the female condom entirely covers the female genital region, it prevents the transmission of sexually transmitted disease infections.
- This is a method that does not have any adverse effects and could be used by women without having to consult a doctor.
- The female condom is thicker and safer than the male condom.

## Disadvantages

Some women may initially find it difficult to insert the female condom correctly. These condoms are expensive and are currently three times costlier than male condoms. Their availability is limited presently only to big metropolitan cities in India.

### Points to note:

- **The female condom should be used only once and cannot be reused. A new condom should be used for every sexual act.**
- **An old condom past its expiry date should not be used.**
- **These condoms should not be exposed to heat and should not be kept in the sun.**
- **Female condoms are the only woman -controlled method that prevent transmission of sexually transmitted infections including HIV.**
- **A female condom should be used only once and cannot be reused.**



61, Karumarapakkam Village, Veerapuram (Post).  
Thirukazhukundrum (Via) Kanchipuram District,  
Tamil Nadu, India - 603109  
Telephone: +91 44 27491254, Mobile: +91 98429 19110  
Email: [ruwsec@vsnl.com](mailto:ruwsec@vsnl.com), [ruwsec.tn@gmail.com](mailto:ruwsec.tn@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.ruwsec.org](http://www.ruwsec.org) • Facebook: [ruwsec.india](https://www.facebook.com/ruwsec.india)

*Printing support by*

