

# Condoms



**MESMAC**  
NORTH EAST

# Condoms

## Why use condoms when having sex?

Condoms help prevent the transmission of most sexually transmitted infections (STI's), for example HIV, Gonorrhoea, Syphilis, Herpes, Chlamydia and the virus that can cause Genital Warts.

**Please see our STI leaflet for more information.**

## Sensation and safety when using condoms.

Nobody has ever suggested that condoms are perfect, or that sex feels the same if you use them. Many men think that condoms are uncomfortable, can ruin the sensation or even interrupt the fun, but lots of men don't find using condoms a problem at all. You may have heard about condoms splitting or not being strong enough, there is some truth in this. Condoms are not 100% safe. However, the main reason that condoms fail is because they are used wrongly (oil based lube is used, they are torn when opening the packet or are put on incorrectly) **Condoms are still the most effective barrier to HIV and other STI's during anal or vaginal sex.**

## Which condoms are best?

It is best to look for condoms that carry a Kitemark or CE mark, some brands you may be familiar with are: **Pasante Extra Strong, Boys Own Extra Strong, Durex Ultra Strong & Mates Super Strong.** These condoms are stronger than ordinary ones. There are many different types

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of condoms for sale including Ribbed, Trim and Large, you may want to look for a condom that's more suited to your needs. We recommend that you use an extra strong condom for anal sex but ordinary condoms can be used if necessary. Extra strong condoms are widely available in gay bars, clubs and saunas throughout the North East. There are also ranges of flavoured condoms available, these are recommended for use when having oral sex but they are not strong enough for anal sex.

We would also recommend that you regularly visit a local GUM clinic - even if you have safer sex and use condoms.

**Please see our Sucking leaflet for more information on oral sex.**

## How to use condoms properly.

One of the best ways you can improve your safer sex life is by spending a little time to get it right. Research suggests that when people have negative experiences with condoms it's because they have been used wrongly.

## The following is a step-by-step guide to using condoms.

- Open the packet carefully to prevent damaging the condom (don't rip it open with your teeth)
- Only put the condom on when your dick is hard, place the condom over the end of your dick with the roll on the outside. If you have a foreskin pull it back before covering the head of your dick with the condom.

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- Don't put lube on the shaft of your dick before putting the condom on as this could cause the condom to slip off inside your partner.
- Squeeze the tip of the condom between your thumb and finger to expel the air.
- Holding the condom in place, carefully roll it down to the base of your dick. It might sound ridiculous but don't try to cover your balls. Smooth the condom to get rid of any air bubbles.
- Spread plenty of water-based lube over the condom on your dick and on your partner's anus or vagina. DON'T use Vaseline, massage oil or moisturiser these make the condom weaker so they are more likely to split.
- While you're having sex check occasionally that the condom is still in place, and use more lube if necessary.
- If your dick goes soft during sex, the condom might slip off so put your fingers round the base and this will help it stay put. If the condom does split or slip off during sex, then withdraw as soon as you find out.
- After cumming withdraw your dick before it goes limp (this can prevent leakage). Hold onto the base to make sure it doesn't slip off.
- Dispose of the condom carefully in the bin NOT down the toilet as it could contain air and would be difficult to flush away.

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## Practice makes perfect

If you're not very good with condoms or feel clumsy when putting them on, why not try practicing with them yourself? By making condoms a part of your sex play you will get used to them and might even find the condoms a turn on themselves. Take your time and follow the instructions step-by-step so you know what you are doing.

You could also practice putting condoms on your partner, it's another way of getting used to it and it can also be part of your foreplay.

## What is lube?

Sometimes people use condoms for anal sex without any lubricant on them; apart from being painful this can also create other problems. The condom is more likely to rip, tear or slip off because of the increased friction. Having sex without lube greatly increases the chance of tears or cuts to the lining of the anus as well as tearing the condom.

The most important thing to remember is **DON'T USE ANY OIL BASED LUBRICANTS WITH CONDOMS**, they weaken the condom within minutes and it may well split while having sex. If you're about to have sex and you realise you have no water based lube, you should still never be tempted to use oil based lube or anything that has oil in it - it will make the condom useless. It's not ideal because it dries out quickly but you can use spit if there's no other alternative.

**DON'T USE:** Baby oil, Butter, Margarine, Lard, Vaseline,

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Vegetable oil, Moisturiser or Body lotion, instead USE lots of water-based lube such as: KY, TLC, ID Glide or Wet Light, there are other brands available. Some people like different types of lube so just experiment until you find the one you're happy with.

- Wait till your dick is hard.
- Squeeze the tip of the condom to get rid of any air.
- Roll back the condom all the way down to the base of your dick.
- Smooth out any air bubbles.
- Spread water-based lube over the condom on your partner's anus or vagina.
- While you're having sex check occasionally to see if the condom is still in place.



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**For more information on sexual health, GUM clinics, safer sex or other things you may be concerned about contact your local service.**

## NEWCASTLE

MESMAC North East: 0191 233 1333  
(MESMAC NE work throughout the region)  
(Minicom: 0191 233 2112)

## GATESHEAD

STAG Project: 0191 490 1708

## NORTHUMBERLAND

LGBT Worker: 01670 523 701

## COUNTY DURHAM

GAD: 01325 355 551  
Health Promotion (north): 0191 374 4131  
Health Promotion (south): 01325 746 141

## TEESSIDE

MESMAC North East: 01642 804 400  
(Minicom: 01642 732 392)  
Teesside Positive Action: 01642 254 598



# **MESMAC**

## **NORTH EAST**

For more information contact:

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**TEXT: MESMAC (space) MEN (space)**

**Then your message to 60003**

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