



## The Internal Condom

(Vaginal Condom)

### What is an Internal Condom?

The internal condom is a soft, loose fitting plastic pouch that lines the vagina. It has a soft ring at each end. The inner ring is at the closed end of the condom. The inner ring is used to put the device inside the vagina and keep it in place. The outer ring is found at the open end of the condom and stays outside the vagina and partly covers the lips of the vagina. The condom acts as a barrier during sexual activity. When used during vaginal sex with penetration of a penis, the condom prevents bodily fluids (semen and pre-ejaculate) from entering the vaginal cavity. Even though it is hard to see, pre-ejaculate is a fluid that is found on the tip of an erect penis before it releases semen, and it can cause pregnancy or transmit an STI. It can be there even if you just took a shower. So, it is important that the condom is in place before *any* bodily contact. The condom also helps to protect the other partner (with a penis) against their partner's bodily fluids such as vaginal secretions, blood, or discharge.

When an internal condom is used during vaginal sex with penetration of a sex toy, it helps to keep the toy clean from a virus or bacteria. When a sex toy is shared between two partners, a new condom should be placed in the vagina when the toy is switched between partners. Also, it is important to thoroughly wash sex toys after use.

### When Should I Use an Internal Condom?

An internal condom is used when engaging in vaginal sex, which includes penetration of a penis or sex toy. The internal condom is NOT suggested for use during anal sex.

### Where Can I Get Internal Condoms?

You can get internal condoms in drugstores, sex stores, and on-line. Internal condoms normally cost about \$5 each. Planned Parenthood provides them for \$2.

### How Effective Are Internal Condoms?

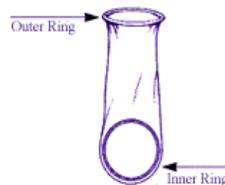
Internal condoms offer good protection against STIs that are passed through bodily fluids, such as

chlamydia and gonorrhea. On the other hand, internal condoms are more effective in protecting against STIs that are passed through skin-to-skin contact, such as genital herpes and genital warts (HPV). When used **perfectly**, internal condoms are approximately 95% effective in protecting against pregnancy. This means that five out of 100 individuals who use internal condoms **perfectly** will become pregnant within one year. Normal use of internal condoms is approximately 75-80% effective in protecting against pregnancy.

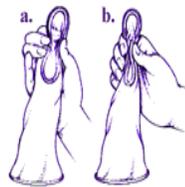
## **How Do I Properly Use an Internal Condom?**

If you are using internal condoms during sex, both you and your partner should know how to use them properly. *Everyone needs to be responsible for their own sexual health!* If an individual is uncomfortable with internal condoms, they can practice inserting them alone, to reduce pressure. Internal condoms may be tricky for the first-time user because they come lubricated and may be slippery. Condoms have to be used properly and consistently to be effective in protecting against STIs and/or pregnancy. Follow these steps for effective internal condom use:

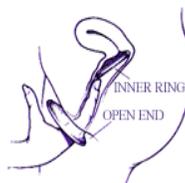
- 1. Check the expiry date.**
- 2. Remove the condom from package and straighten it out.**



- 3. a) Hold the inner ring between your thumb and middle finger. Put your index finger on the pouch between your other two fingers, or  
b) just squeeze the inner ring**



- 4. While holding/squeezing the inner ring insert the condom as far as it will go in the vagina. It is in the right place when the inner ring can no longer be felt in the vagina. Don't worry – it cannot go too far.**



- 5. Make sure the condom is not twisted. Also, the outer ring should be outside the vaginal opening and should stay in this position during sex.**



**When both partners are ready, guide the erect penis or sex toy directly into the condom. Make sure that the penis or sex toy does not go into the vagina outside of the pouch.**

6. **If the condom is being used for penetration of a penis, once ejaculation (“cumming”) has taken place, remove the condom before standing up. To remove, simply twist and squeeze the outer ring to keep the contents (ejaculate) inside, and gently pull out. Dispose of the condom in the trash, not the toilet.**



**If the condom is used for penetration of a sex toy, simply remove the condom (see above) when needed and throw in the trash. Never use an internal condom more than once!**

### **Benefits of the Internal Condom**

- Internal condoms are good for latex allergies; they are made out of polyurethane.
  - Oil-based or water-based lubricant are safe for polyurethane condoms
- The internal condom is one size fits all, which is beneficial for individuals who have difficulty with finding condoms to properly fit their penis.
  - Internal condoms can be inserted up to 8 hours before sex.
- Internal condoms are a safer sex method that can be carried and inserted by an individual with a vagina. Therefore, they do not have to rely on their partner to use protection against STIs.
- Internal condoms offer more protection against skin-to-skin STIs than male condoms. The outer ring of the internal condom covers a larger surface area of the external genitals.

If you have more questions regarding condom use, other safer sex methods or birth control, please feel free to drop by our Centre or contact us by phone or email. If you want to see a doctor regarding any sexual health concern, please call us to make an appointment.

## **Planned Parenthood Sexual Health Questions? We Have Answers!**

### **Location:**

47 St. Clare’s Avenue, St. John’s, NL, A1C 2J9

### **Hours:**

Monday: 9am - 4:30pm

Tuesday: 9am - 4:30pm  
Wednesday: 9am - 4:30pm  
Thursday: 12pm – 6:00pm  
Friday: 9am - 4:30pm

**Phone:**

709-579-1009

Toll Free 1-877-NO MYTHS (1-877-666-9847)

**Website:**

[www.plannedparenthoodnlshc.com/](http://www.plannedparenthoodnlshc.com/)

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