



Contraceptive Sponge

(AKA “THE SPONGE”)

What is the Contraceptive Sponge?

The contraceptive sponge is a small, disposable barrier made out of polyurethane foam that contains spermicide.

It helps to prevent pregnancy in several ways:

- It absorbs sperm
- Its spermicide helps kill sperm before entering the uterus
 - It helps to block sperm from entering the uterus
- The Sponge DOES NOT provide coverage against STI’s. It should never be used as the only protection against pregnancy AND STIs.

Warning: Spermicides may INCREASE the risk of STI infections, since the substance may irritate mucous surfaces, making it more vulnerable to infection. In fact, the World Health Organization recommends against the use of spermicide (whether alone, with the sponge, with condoms, etc.) UNLESS sexual partners are monogamous and confident that they are not at risk of passing along STIs.

How Does the Contraceptive Sponge Prevent Pregnancy?

The Contraceptive Sponge is placed in front of the cervix, acting as a barrier as it absorbs and traps sperm. The Sponge also contains spermicide, which destroys sperm.

How Effective is the Contraceptive Sponge?

The Sponge is more effective in individuals who have not yet given birth than in individuals who have already given birth, due to the change in the cervix. For individuals who have not already given birth the Sponge is 84-91% effective in preventing pregnancy; for those who have given birth the rate is 68-80% for preventing pregnancy.

Remember that no birth control method is 100% effective; therefore, you always have some risk of pregnancy if you are sexually active.

Since the Contraceptive Sponge only protects against pregnancy, individuals need to use condoms consistently and properly for more protection against sexually transmitted infections.

Where Can I get the Contraceptive Sponge?

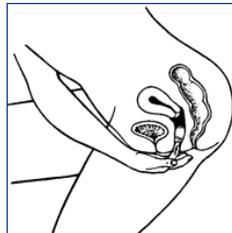
The Sponge is available at drugstores. You do not need a Doctor's prescription to purchase the Sponge.

How Do I Use the Contraceptive Sponge?

The Contraceptive Sponge is inserted into the vagina at least 15 minutes before sex and left in for at least 6 hours following sex. It is also convenient for individuals who only have sex occasionally.

INSERTION:

Insert so that the **wet side** is against your cervix. Place your index finger into one of the slots toward the side of the sponge and push the sponge into place as deeply as possible inside the vagina, preferably all the way in against the cervix.

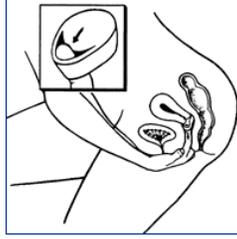


This may take some practice. It may be easier to insert the sponge if you are in a squatting position or lying on your back with your knees lifted toward your chest.

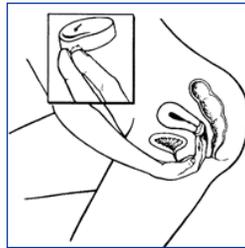


REMOVAL:

The SPONGE must be left in for at least 6 hours after sex, but no more than 12 hours. Hook your middle or index finger through one of the slots / loops in the sponge and pull downward.



Again, you may find this easier if you use the same position as you did for insertion. Throw the sponge away. **DO NOT REUSE.**



What Are Some of the Benefits of the Contraceptive Sponge?

- Requires no day-to-day routine
- Does not contain hormones
 - Is reversible
- No prescription required
 - Very discreet to carry
- Can be inserted hours before sex

What Are Some Disadvantages of the Contraceptive Sponge?

- Spermicide in the Sponge could cause irritation to either partner, and this irritation can lead to increased chance of contracting STI infection
 - Must be inserted at least 15 mins before sex
 - Cannot be used during menstrual period
- Individuals have to be comfortable touching their own genitals to insert correctly, and practice doing so

Spermicides can increase your chance of getting an STIs. If it causes irritation, which may or MAY NOT BE NOTICEABLE, such as a rash or broken skin, then it will be easier for viruses and bacteria to enter your body. It is recommended that people only use spermicides with partners who have been tested for STI's.

If you have further questions regarding BC options or would like to see a health care provider regarding any sexual health matter, please contact us.

Sexual Health Questions? We Have Answers!

Location:

47 St. Clare 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:

579-1009

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