

Session 3: Safer Sex Practices and Communication Skills

Objectives

1. Establish relative risk categories for HIV through sexual transmission
2. Motivate participants to adopt harm reduction approach emphasizing less risky sex behaviors
3. Increase condom use skills
4. Increase Peer Mentoring skills that address Sex Risk Behaviors

Materials

- Tape recorder, microphone, and tapes with labels
- Sex Risk Peer Mentoring video and VCR equipment
- Group Rules poster (from Session 1)
- “Peer Mentors” Poster (from Session 1)
- “SPEAKK” poster (from Session 1)
- Myths and Facts Poster and Velcro Cards (from Session 1)
- Sex Risk Ladder Poster
- Flipchart
- Markers, pens
- Sex Risk Ladder (handed out at end)
- Male condoms—multiple types and flavors, including 1 open lambskin
- Female condoms
- Lubricants—multiple types of oil and water-based
- Paper towels to wipe hands after condom demonstration
- Scissors for cutting male condom
- 6 Penis models

Philadelphia Only

- Female Anatomy Poster
- 2 different Pelvic models

- REALITY female condom pamphlets
- Where to get male and female condoms for FREE (hand-out)

Handouts

- Sex Risk Ladder (handed out at end)
- Common questions and answers about male and female condom use
- How to use a male condom pamphlet

Overview

- I. Welcome Back and Peer Mentor Homework (15 minutes)
- II. Sex Risk Ladder/Steps (10 minutes)
- III. Male Condom Use Demonstration (30 minutes)
- IV. Practice Male Condom Use (10 minutes)
- V. Break (10 minutes)
- VI. Female Condom Use Demonstration (15 minutes)—Philadelphia only
- VII. Practice Female Condom Use (10 minutes)—Philadelphia only
- VIII. Condom Summary (2 minutes)
- IX. Peer Mentoring in Action Video Using SPEAKK (8 minutes)
- X. Peer Mentoring Homework and Wrap-up (10 minutes)

I. Debrief from Peer Mentor Training Activity (15 minutes)

Procedure

Group leaders welcome participants back to the group and ask them to review their peer mentoring homework. Then briefly touch upon the topics that will be covered in today's session.

Hello everyone, and welcome back.

At the end of last session, we asked you to bring up the topic of drug risk with one of your network members. We suggested that you could use the risk ladder to talk about harm reduction options. Let's go around the room and share how it went. If you didn't do it we want to hear about the barriers that prevented you from talking with one of your network members.

Questions about the Interaction

1. What actually happened?

- How did you bring up the topic?*
- What was their first response when you brought up the topic?*

2. What went well?

- What kinds of questions got them to talk?*
- What techniques did you use to engage them in conversation?*
- Did they try to avoid answering any of your questions or information that you were presenting and what did you do to get them to talk?*

3. What did not go so well?

- What kinds of questions did not get a response?*
- Did they try to avoid answering any of your questions or information that you were presenting and what did you do to get them to talk?*

4. Would you like some suggestions from your group about ways to improve your interaction?

**Note to Facilitator**

It is OK not to have everyone share his or her experience. Try to choose at least one participant who was not able to do the homework and then engage the other group members to help problem solve ways to overcome the barriers.

Also get the participants to comment on ways to improve the interaction.

Transition to Topic of Sex Risk for HIV

Okay, so it seems that talking to other people about drug risk behavior [summary of experiences, both positive and negative]. Thanks for doing the peer mentor homework. It is really an important part of your training. Today we are going to start talking about specific ways to reduce HIV risk through safer sex and give you a chance to practice talking with your network members using the SPEAKK skills.

II. Sex Risk Ladder/Steps (10 minutes)

Procedure

Begin this section by hanging up a blank Sex Risk Ladder poster. Explain that the top of the ladder is the highest risk. As you describe each behavior, post the behavior on the ladder.

Although the script does not distinguish between receptive and insertive anal or vaginal sex, the group may raise this issue. It is true that receptive anal and vaginal sex are both more risky than insertive sex. BUT, it is important to emphasize that BOTH partners are at risk (the insertive and the receptive partner) for getting HIV from anal and vaginal sex. (Remember the MYTHS and FACTS point that men can get HIV from vaginal sex, despite the common myth that says they cannot.)

Before we start talking about specific ways that you can reduce the risk of getting HIV through sex, we want to mention a couple of things. Talking about sex can be embarrassing for many people. We often make jokes and act silly, which is OK, but we need to remember to stay focused. Also it is important to remember our group rules, especially RESPECT. People like different things when it comes to sex. For example, some people like oral sex, and some people think it's nasty. But, remember being a Peer Mentor means not being judgmental.

As you see, we have a Sex Risk Ladder posted that is a lot like our Injection Risk Ladder that we had at our last meeting.

Ok, so now let's take a look at our risk ladder and talk about specific ways that we can reduce the risk of getting HIV while having sex. Remember, just like a regular ladder, being at the top is riskier than being on the first or second step, or standing on the ground. As you move down the steps, your level of risk decreases.

At the top of the ladder are the riskiest types of sex: those are having vaginal or anal sex without a condom. Another way of saying anal sex is, "sex in the butt."

While some studies show higher HIV transmission rates with anal sex than with vaginal sex, other studies show the risk to be the same. Therefore, it might not really decrease a person's risk level if they just change from having anal sex to having vaginal sex. We want to make sure you understand that having these types of sex without a condom is high risk.

Performing oral sex, where your mouth is on someone's penis or vagina is much less risky than vaginal or anal sex. Remember that HIV can be transmitted through cum (male or female) so getting cum or women's vaginal fluid in your mouth is still a risk. This risk can be higher if you have cuts or open sores on your lips, mouth, or tongue.

As you can see the lowest risk behavior on this ladder is mutual masturbation. This means using your hands only to get each other off. If HIV infected cum/vaginal fluid gets in open cuts or scratches on your hand, there may be a small risk of infection. This risk is very small.

For all of these behaviors, putting a barrier, like a condom between you and [the body fluid] greatly reduces the risk of HIV transmission. HIV can't pass through latex, plastic wrap, or polyurethane. After the break we will talk a lot about using condoms as a way to reduce HIV risk. And you will get a chance to practice your peer mentor skills by showing someone how to use a condom.

We also want to add that having any other type of sexually transmitted disease, or STD, can greatly increase the risk of transmitting the HIV virus. Sometimes people might not know that their partner has an STD, or they might not even know it if they, themselves, have an STD. That's because some STDs don't have obvious signs or symptoms, especially in women. Even though there may not be symptoms, having an STD still greatly increases the risk of HIV transmission.

As Peer Mentors, we can talk with others about the risks of different types of sex and make suggestions about ways that they can reduce their risk of becoming infected. People may choose different options during different situations or with different partners. The goal is to make sure people know what the risks are and what options they have for being safer.

III. Male Condom Demonstration (30 minutes)

A. Introduce Male Condoms (6 minutes)

Procedure

Pass around different types of male condoms—latex, lubricated, non-lubricated, flavored, minted, black tie, ribbed, studded, colored, different sizes, etc.

Pass around an opened (in packaging) lambskin condom (if available at site).

Encourage participants to handle and discuss all the different types of condoms.

Stretch a condom over your hand/arm to show they are strong and hard to break.

Make tissues or paper towels available, so people can wipe off lubricant.

First we're going to pass some different types of male condoms around and let you get familiar with them. Read the packaging, open them, take them out, smell them, and even stretch them to see how strong they are and what they look like.

Notice that some are lubricated, and others are not. Some are flavored. Some are colored. And some have textures or ribs, to add pleasure.

[Lambskin may not be available at every site; this discussion should be modified to fit site's needs]

I want to show you a lambskin condom. This is a different kind of condom not made from latex, but made from lambskin. Notice it smells different and says lambskin on the package.

Why isn't the lambskin condom effective in protecting against transmitting HIV? [Get participants to explain, or else say:] Lambskin condoms do not protect from HIV because tiny pores that you can't see with your eye (microscopic holes) allow the virus to pass through the condom.

Only latex and polyurethane condoms prevent HIV. Polyurethane is a type of plastic. Latex condoms are more common than and cheaper than polyurethane condoms. Although it's rare, some people are allergic to latex, and so those people who are allergic could use polyurethane condoms.

Some people think that condoms are way too small for them. [Put condom over hand to show how it stretches.] Condoms come in different sizes, and it's important to find one that suits you or your partner.

Final point:

As you can see, there are many different types of male condoms out there—experiment with the different types and find out what works for you. But remember that you will want to make sure the ones you choose are made of latex or polyurethane because only condoms made of latex or polyurethane can prevent HIV.

B. Introduce Lubricants (6 minutes)**Procedure**

Introduce the idea that water-based lubricants are safe to use with male condoms, and oil-based lubricants are unsafe because they break down latex.

Pass around examples of a variety of types of lubricants from any store [Should include Vaseline, hand lotion, massage oil, KY jelly, astroglide, etc.].

Allow participants time to "experience" the lubricants: read the box/bottle, smell, touch, etc.

Ask participants to identify the safe and unsafe lubricants—emphasize the point that only water-based lubricants should be used with latex condoms.

Now that we have looked at different kinds of condoms, let's look at the different kinds of lubricants, or "lubes," out there. People use lubricants for many different reasons—and some people don't use them at all. For example, some people feel that condoms are dry, and that lubricant helps to make sex feel better. Some women like a little extra lubricant to make their vaginas wetter. Some couples just like the feel of extra slip and slide. Some couples don't. Using lubricant is a personal decision.

If you are going to use a lubricant, make sure to use a WATER-BASED lubricant with LATEX male condoms.

OIL-BASED lubricants, like Vaseline or baby oil, will eat away at the condoms and will make male condoms break.

[Now pass out lubricants, and let participants examine them.]

Here we have some examples of some lubes for you to look at. Notice that some of them are not safe because they are oil based. Can anyone point out which ones are unsafe? [Vaseline, baby oil, hand lotion, massage oil]

The rest of these are safe to use [astroglide, flavored lubes, KY jelly, etc.] They can feel and taste very different from each other. Picking a water-based lubricant that turns you on and that you enjoy can make sex with condoms a lot more fun and pleasurable.

C. Anal and Oral Sex with a Male Condom (3 minutes)

Many of you may not know that male condoms can be used for different kinds of sex—vaginal, oral, anal.

- *In addition to vaginal and anal (“butt”) sex, you can also use male condoms for “blow jobs”—sucking on a man’s penis. One way to make the latex taste better and to have more fun is to use flavored condoms or flavored lubes for blow-jobs.*
- *Male condoms can also be used for oral sex or “going down” on a woman. In this case, you cut the male condom open with scissors [into a square]. [Demonstrate by holding up an open, unrolled male condom and showing that you will be cutting off the tip, and then cutting it lengthwise. Then show them the shortcut of taking a rolled male condom, rolling it down one revolution, cutting off the tip, and then cutting the edge of the ring.] Once you cut the male condom, then you lay it flat against the woman’s vaginal lips (labia). Always make sure there is that layer of the condom between your mouth and the other person.*

D. Male Condom Demonstration (10 minutes)

Procedure

Group leaders demonstrate proper condom usage using a penis model. Group leader may use the anatomical chart to help with the demonstration or may ask the other group leader to hold the penis model as the condom is applied. One or both facilitators may demonstrate putting on the male condom. Good to show that males and females can put on male condoms and be comfortable with them

Commentary

Exaggerate each step, demonstrate slowly, and talk about what you are about to do before you do it. Do not get sidetracked with other points during the demonstration.

Make sure that participants are paying very close attention throughout the demonstration (ask them to hold comments and questions, per the script).

Emphasize that this will help them to effectively mentor their network members.

Now we will demonstrate how to properly put on a male condom. Pay close attention because after this, you’ll pair up and practice this yourself on a penis model. I am going to show you this now, and we’ll answer all your questions at the end—after I’m finished.

You may already know how to use a condom, but we will show you how to teach all the steps to your network members.

1. *First we choose a latex condom and make sure you check the expiration date on the package.*
2. *Next, open the package with fingers being careful not to tear the condom. No teeth or scissors.*
3. *Before you place the condom on the head of the penis, start to roll it down before putting it on the penis to see which way it rolls. You don't want to place it on the penis the wrong way and then flip it because precum that gets on it would then be on the outside if you flipped it over [motion]. If you do put it on the wrong way by mistake, throw it out & get another condom. Place the condom on the head of the penis, making sure that the reservoir tip sticks out. Putting a drop of lubricant inside the tip of the condom may give extra feeling.*
4. *Pinch the reservoir tip to get the air out, so that there's room for the man to cum.*
5. *Unroll the condom all the way down to the base of the penis.*
6. *You may also want to put lubricant on the outside of the condom. If you do, be sure to use a water-based lube, like the ones we discussed.*
7. *Now you are ready to have safer sex. You may find that you want to add more lube during sex because condoms can dry a woman out.*

Immediately after cumming:

8. *You need to hold the condom at the base of the penis and carefully withdraw (pull out) before the penis becomes soft.*
9. *You roll the condom down and remove it from the penis, making sure that the contents of the reservoir tip don't spill.*
10. *Now you can dispose of the condom in a trash can (not in a toilet).*
11. *Don't use the same condom more than once.*

Sometimes you don't want your partner to know that you are using a condom. Although it is best to talk about condoms with your partner—it isn't always possible.

Women—you can slide it on with your hands or mouth.

Men—you can put it on before having intercourse.

Does anyone have any questions about how to properly put on a male condom?

E. Common Questions and Answers about Male Condoms (5 minutes)

Procedure

Group leaders field questions from participants about using condoms and lubricants.

Commentary

See Common Questions and Answers:

Not mandatory, but meant to be helpful when responding to group questions.

As Peer Mentors we need to know how to properly use latex condoms and water-based lubricants to help keep ourselves safe. We also need to be able to teach our networks and others how to properly use condoms.

This handout answers lots of common questions about how to use a condom and this pamphlet can also help your peers learn how to correctly use a condom. You can check these out at the break and you can all take home a copy of this pamphlet today. This may be helpful for you when trying to talk with your networks about proper condom use.

IV. Practice Male Condom Use (10 minutes)

Procedure

Have them pair off. Give each pair a penis model and some condoms. Observe their practice – giving positive feedback for correctly putting on the condom and answering questions as needed.

Now you will pair off and each pair will get a penis model and some condoms to practice. Take turns practicing. Also try demonstrating all the steps we showed you – as if you were showing your network members how to use condoms correctly.

V. Break (10 minutes)

VI. Female Condom Demonstration (15 minutes)

A. Skills Building—Female Condom Use: *Philadelphia Only*

Procedure

Pass around examples of the dry demonstration condom, the lubricated condom, in and out of the packet.

Allow participants to “experience” the condom by handling, pulling and stretching it.

Now we are going to learn about female condoms. Even though it has been around for several years, many people don't know how to use a female condom.

- 1. This is what a female condom looks like. The female condom is different from the male condom in several ways. First, it's bigger. Second, the female condom is made of polyurethane (a kind of plastic), not latex like a male condom.*
- 2. Because it's polyurethane, you can **use any kind of lubrication** with it. It is also stronger than latex. **It transfers heat better**, which can increase pleasure for some people. Also, people who are allergic to latex can use female condoms.*
- 3. Many people enjoy sex more with the female condom, and find that it feels more natural. People also like having the choice about whether to use a male or a female condom.*
- 4. Using a female condom doesn't put a woman on the spot of asking men to wear a male condom if she is not comfortable asking that. Also female condoms can be inserted up to 6 hours before having sex.*
- 5. If used correctly, the female condom provides a high level of protection. Some men like to put it in their partner as an intimate act.*
- 6. We recommend that you have sex at least three times with the female condom before you make a final judgment about whether you like it. It gets easier and more comfortable to use after the first couple of times.*
- 7. The female condom costs more than the male condom, but there are some places where you can get it for free. In Philadelphia, you can get free female condoms at City Health Centers, Planned Parenthood, etc. We will give you a list where you can get free female condoms.*

Additional points about HOW a female condom can be used:

We will demonstrate how to properly put a female condom in the vagina for vaginal sex. Then we'll also talk about how it can be used for oral and anal sex. Then, you'll get to practice putting it on a plastic model. We'll answer all your questions at the end of the demonstration.

B. Female Condom Demonstration**Procedure**

First orient participants to the relevant parts of the female anatomy using the female anatomy poster.

Using the clear plastic pelvic model, demonstrate proper female condom use. Also lead a discussion around trouble-shooting techniques.

A group leader does it once and then the demo is repeated with the other group leader practicing insertion, so that participants observe a woman putting it into the pelvic model and also a man “helping” to put it in his partner.

When a female group leader demonstrates, her palm should be facing up, just as it would be if a woman was inserting it into her own vagina.

Remind participants about “Reality” pamphlets on resource table.

[Using the Female Anatomy Poster, say:]

Now, a few points about female anatomy: you'll need to know 3 key parts of the woman's body, which will help you make sure you have the condom in the right way.

First, this is the vagina: The vagina is where the penis goes. It is also where the baby comes out and is also called the “birth canal.” This is where the female condom rests when it is inside the body. It lines the vagina and hangs outside over the “lips” of the vagina (or outer vaginal area).

Second, this is the cervix. The cervix is the bottom of the uterus (sometimes people call the uterus “womb” (where the baby grows), and it puts a “cap” on the end of the vagina. Therefore, when you put the female condom in, it will stop here, and it won't float away.

Third, this is the pubic bone. This is the hard bone that makes up your pelvis. This is located near the bottom of your vagina, near the opening. This part is important because the inner ring of the female condom has to be up past this point (past the pubic bone) in order to be in the right way.

[Then show on the clear pelvic model, orienting them to the anatomy on the model, if needed]

Now, we will use this pelvic model to show you how to put in a female condom. This model is a little smaller than a woman and is not as flexible, but by seeing this, you will get a better idea of how to use the female condom.

- 1. Make sure to check the expiration date on the package.*
- 2. OK, now open the package without tearing the female condom—no teeth or scissors.*
- 3. Now, separate the two rings. The loose ring inside the pouch is called the inner ring and the ring connected to the opening of the pouch is called outer ring.*
- 4. Next, you take the two fingers that you snap with (thumb and middle finger) and grab and pinch the edges of the inner ring together so it makes a point. (like a diaphragm). [Hold pinched condom.] NOTE: This will be slippery and tricky and that is completely normal until you get the hang of it. Put your pointer finger between the thumb and middle finger to stop the condom from slipping.*
- 5. Spread the lips of vagina apart; insert the pointed inner ring into the vagina.*
- 6. Then, put your pointer finger inside the condom and push the inner ring and the lining of the condom up inside the vagina. The ring will fall into place once it is correctly inserted. The inner ring should be between the cervix and the pubic bone. If it hurts, the inner ring is probably not in right and needs to be pushed up further.*
- 7. The outer ring remains outside the vagina about 1.5 inches, protecting the labia, or lips outside the vagina. [Show outer placement of condom against labia on model.] If properly inserted, it should not hurt and women can't feel it.*

During Sex

When you are using the female condom, the woman should guide the penis into the center of the condom to make sure that the penis goes into the condom, not to one side. (Demonstrate with penis and pelvic model)

After Cumming

- 8. Twist the end of the condom that is protecting the labia. Remove the condom by pulling, being careful not to spill its contents.*
- 9. Dispose of the condom in a trashcan, not in a toilet.*

Repeat demonstration giving other group leader a chance to lead.

Trouble-Shooting/Avoiding Pitfalls:

*Since this may be brand new to many of you, here are a few more points about how to fix any problems that might come up during sex. The main way to fix a problem is usually to use **MORE LUBRICATION**.*

- *If the condom starts riding out (clinging) to the penis during sex → more lube!*
- *If the condom starts getting pushed in during sex → more lube!*
- *If the condom makes noise during sex (which is rare) → more lube!*

Remember, it is normal that the female condom is slippery and a little tricky to insert. That's why we recommend trying it at least 3 times.

Reminders

- *It is important for women to practice putting the female condom in when you are alone, so you aren't rushed when practicing. A good time to try is in the shower.*
- *Use the female condom at least 3 times during sex before deciding if you like it—it gets easier each time.*
- *Do **not** use a male and female condom together (too much friction and female condom won't stay in place).*
- *Use the female condom **only one time**. If you have sex more than once, throw it away and get another female condom.*

C. Anal and Oral sex with the Female Condom:

Many people use the female condom for oral and anal sex.

To use the female condom for ANAL SEX, you should take out the inner ring, put the condom on the erect (hard) penis—like a male condom—and then use lots of lubricants. One reminder, anal sex is one of the riskiest forms of sex—remember the risk ladder? Therefore, it is very, very important to always use protection during anal sex.

To use the female condom for ORAL SEX ON A WOMAN, you can either 1) cut it open like we showed you with the male condom, and use like a dental dam [a plastic square to be placed over the vagina during oral sex] or 2) insert the condom into the woman, and then lick/suck/kiss through the part of the female condom that is hanging outside the vagina. For ORAL SEX ON A MAN, we recommend that you use a male condom.

D. Common Questions and Answers (Female Condom)

Procedure

Group leaders field questions from participants about using female condoms.

Commentary

See handout: Common Questions and Answers.

Not mandatory, but meant to be helpful when responding to group questions.

We want to say again, that as Peer Mentors, you should know how to properly use female condoms and/or be able to refer your network members to a place where they can get them. Remember to Stay Positive when talking with others about using a female condom because many people are hesitant to try something new.

We have a pamphlet that shows you the right way to use a female condom and it can also help your networks learn how to correctly use one. We will hand these pamphlets out for you to take home.

VII. Practice Female Condom Use (10 minutes)

Procedure

Have volunteers come up one at a time to practice inserting a female condom using the pelvis model. Guide and give feedback for proper insertion. Encourage everyone to try at least once—including male and female participants.

Just like with the male condoms, now you will get a chance to practice. Since we only have one female model, you can come up one at a time and try it. We encourage everyone to take a turn. Even if you don't plan to use them, as a peer educator you can learn more about them by practicing on the model. Everyone will have a chance to try.

VIII. Condom Summary (2 minutes)

Finally, we want to make a few more points:

- 1. To be effective, condoms must be used for the whole sex act - from beginning to end.*
- 2. Inserting the penis before putting on a condom (called “dipping”) can lead to transmission of HIV and other STDs.*
- 3. Some people think that using two male condoms together increases their protection. That’s not true. Do **not** “double bag” condoms because the friction from the two condoms will increase the likelihood that they will break.*
- 4. Avoid sex when the woman has her period because of the presence of blood.*
- 5. Proper use of condoms includes storing them correctly. Avoid keeping condoms in your back pocket, your wallet, or other places where they will get too hot. Heat breaks latex down and increases the chances that the condom will break. If you have to keep a condom in your wallet, because you want to have protection on you, replace it with a new one if you have not used it in a while.*

IX. Peer Mentoring Video and Discussion—Sex Risk (8 minutes)

Procedure

Show the video up to the "pause" in the tape.

At the pause, ask the group to identify what positive skills Janice showed in her initial approach to discussing sex risk with Woody.

Use the "freeze frame" idea during the pause to help the group identify strategies to help Janice mentor Woody.

Show the second part of the video, and discuss as scripted below.

So, let's watch a video about being a Peer Mentor. In this video Janice is mentoring Woody to stop having unprotected sex with his girlfriend, Terry.

As you know, it can be difficult to talk to people about sex - especially about their sex risk behaviors. Look closely at the skills you see Janice use in approaching Woody about reducing his sex risk for HIV.

Play Video. Stop at Pause in Video.

Let's say that Janice can step out of the box and use our "freeze frame" to ask you all for help. What are some ideas you would give her to help her to mentor Woody?

[Allow the group to give/discuss 2-3 ideas for a couple minutes. Ask for SPEAKK skills, specifically, if they don't offer any.]

These are great ideas—let's see what Janice does.

Resume playing Video to the end. Ask the Video Discussion questions below:

1. *What did you notice that the Peer Mentor, Janice, did well?* [As the participants identify good Peer Mentoring, paraphrase the skills and point to the SPEAKK poster.]
2. *What did you notice Janice did not do so well?* [Again use the SPEAKK skills poster to frame what the participants are discussing.]
3. *If you were Woody, would you have been persuaded by Janice to be safer? Why or why not?*

X. Peer Mentoring Homework and Wrap-Up (10 minutes)

Procedure

Each participant names or gives the first initial of someone they will talk to. The group leader records each person's goal to discuss at beginning of the next session. The participant writes his or her goal on an activity card to take with them to remind them of the activity.

For today's peer mentor training activity, we want to ask everyone to talk to one of your network members about different ways to reduce HIV risk through sex using the Sex Risk Ladder, or if it is more comfortable, to bring up the topic of condom use.

If you talk about condom use, you can talk to them about the female condom or ways that a male and/or female condom can be used for safer oral sex. Remember, we are giving you a hand-out of common questions about condoms that may help you get the conversation going.

Please give me the first name or initials of the person that you'll be talking to. When you come back next time, we can discuss your experiences and how people reacted to the topic of harm reduction for sex.

Common Questions and Answers about Male Condom Use

Q: Why do male condoms always break on me?

A: A couple of things could be happening:

Oil-based lubricants, like baby oil or hand lotion, will eat away at the condom, weaken it, and make it break. Instead: use only water-based lubes like KY jelly.

If the condom is on upside-down it, it may be getting twisted and torn during sex. Be sure to put the condom on the right way to stop this from happening. You know a condom is on the right way if you first check to see which way it unrolls before putting it on the penis. The condom will roll down the penis easily when it is on the right way.

Make sure the condom is not old or expired, and don't use something sharp to open the package—that might start a tear or break in the condom.

Q: I've heard that, for blow-jobs, you can put a male condom on with your mouth—is this possible?

A: We don't recommend this for everyone.

Instead we recommend putting the condom on using your hands. However, we've heard that some people do this. So long as the person carefully unrolls the condom while putting it on and doesn't cause it to tear, it may be possible for you to successfully put a condom on with your mouth.

Q: Is it better to use condoms that are lubricated with non-oxonol-9 (N-9)?

A: For a long time we thought that N-9 (the active ingredient in spermicides) reduced the spread of HIV through sex, but a recent study found that N-9 may actually increase the spread of HIV through sex. Therefore, ***if you have a choice, it is probably best to use condoms without N-9.***

However, *if you don't have a choice*, the amount of N-9 on condoms is so small that it is better to use that condom with N-9 than no condom at all.

Q: What if you put the condom on the wrong way and get a little pre-cum on it? Should you throw it away, or can you flip it over and re-use?

A: *If you have another condom*, it would be best to use another condom, since the end of the condom might have a little pre-cum on it that could infect your partner. *If you don't have another condom*, it would be better to wipe off the condom and use it, than to have sex without any protection.

Q: Sometimes my private parts get all red and itchy after I use a male condom. What's going on?

A: **Some people are allergic to latex and have a mild reaction to it when their skin comes in contact with latex.**

You can test this by rubbing a condom against the back of your hand, if your hand gets red, then you are probably allergic. If this happens you can use condoms made of polyurethane—a form of plastic, not rubber like latex.

Female condoms, and the “Avanti” brand male condom, are made of polyurethane.

Q: How can I stop the male condom from slipping off inside the vagina?

A: This may be due to the fact that the penis is getting soft while inside the vagina.

First, make sure to roll the condom all the way down the base of the penis. Second, be sure to pull out right after cumming, before the penis gets soft. Finally, to reduce friction (too much rubbing) during sex, you can try using more lubricant on the outside of the condom.

Q: Is it better to use two male condoms at once—isn't doubling up on protection better than just one condom?

A: While it may seem like “more is better,” condoms were made to be used one at a time.

Therefore, we recommend using only one male condom at a time. Also, you should never use a male and female condom together, since too much rubbing with both condoms on could cause them to break or slip off.

Do *not* “double-bag!”

Common Questions and Answers about Female Condom Use (for Philadelphia)

Q: Will the inner ring of the female condom hurt?

A: If the female condom is put in the right way, the inner ring should not hurt.

It does not hurt. If there is discomfort, the inner ring is probably not in right and needs to be pushed up further.

The vagina is built to have 8 pound babies come through there, so in comparison, the inner ring of the condom should not hurt your vagina. If you are *sure* that you have the inner ring in the right place (between the cervix and the pubic bone) and it still hurts to have the condom inside you, go see your doctor—this could be a sign of an infection.

Q: Will the female condom get lost inside me?

A: No.

The cervix caps off the top of the vaginal canal so the condom will not be able to “float up” and get lost inside you.

Q: I’ve heard you can wash it out and re-use the female condom. Is that true?

A: The female condom should *only be used one time* and then thrown away.

You may have heard about some studies that are looking into re-using the condom several times, but right now, the female condom is for one-time use only.

Q: Can I use the female condom for a blow job on a guy?

A: We recommend using male condoms for that. However it is better to use something rather than nothing.

Q: Can I use the female condom lubricant with male condoms?

A: Yes, lubricant that is made for the female condom is water-based; therefore, you can use it on male condoms.

The difference is that with male condoms you can only use water-based lubricants and be safe. However, with female condoms, you can use either oil or water-based lubricants.

Q: How long can a woman wear the female condom before she has sex?

A: Female condoms can be inserted up to 6 hours before having sex.

You can put them in 6 hours ahead, or right when you are ready to have sex. They should be removed after having sex (you don't need to leave them in afterward, like a diaphragm).

Q: Can my partner and I use both a female condom and a male condom at the same time for more protection?

A: While it may seem like “more is better,” condoms were made to be used one at a time.

You should never use a male and female condom together, since too much rubbing with both condoms on could cause them to break or slip off.

Do *not* "double-bag!"

Q: What should I do if the condom starts riding out (clinging to the penis)? Or, what if it starts getting pushed in during sex?

A: Use more lubricant. "More lube" is usually the way to fix any problems you might have with female condoms during sex.

Homework:

Session 3 – Safer Sex

Sex Risk Ladder, Male Condoms and Female Condoms

I'm going to talk with _____ about something I learned today.

If I don't see _____ I'll talk with _____.

I plan to talk about _____

The next session is _____ / _____ / _____ at _____ AM/PM

If you need to speak with someone before the next session you can call _____ at _____.

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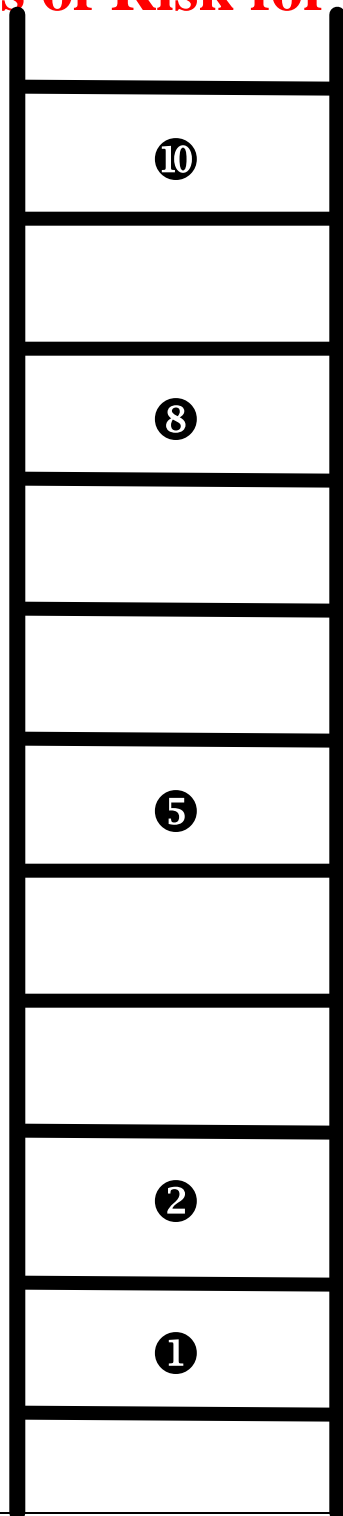
ANAL SEX / VAGINAL SEX

ORAL SEX

MUTUAL MASTURBATION

Sex Risk Ladder

Levels of Risk for HIV



Anal Sex / Vaginal Sex

Oral Sex

Mutual
Masturbation

Sex Risk Ladder

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