

SaferSex4Seniors

Information you need to enjoy safe sexual pleasure!

5 Ways to Overcome Condom Challenges

1. It's difficult enough to maintain an erection without a condom. A condom makes it virtually impossible!

That's an experience a lot of older men have. Try asking your partner to put the condom on you, slow and sexy. Decades ago, this might have caused you to come too fast; today, you can have some fun with it! Experiment with different types of condoms – one that feels a bit tight around the base of your penis may help you stay hard even longer. Once the condom is on, you can try placing a sex toy called a “penis ring” at the base of your penis to help maintain firmness. Another option? You might want to consider having your partner use a female condom.

2. We used them for our first few months together, but we don't need them anymore, right?

It's wonderful to be in a relationship in which you feel like you can trust your partner. But we all know someone who has had a partner step out on them, even though they were sure the relationship was monogamous. Ask yourself, “Am I willing to trust this person with my health, with my life?” That's what we all do every time we have sex without using a condom! It's also important to get tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs,) including HIV, prior to having sex with a new partner, and again later, if you or your partner have sex outside your relationship.

3. I can't get a woman pregnant anymore, so why do I need to use condoms?

You may no longer be able to get a woman pregnant, but you could catch an infection from a woman or you could have an infection without knowing it and pass it on to a partner. Do you dislike condoms so much that you're willing to get an infection that could change your life forever? If not, use condoms.

4. I've been in a monogamous relationship for 30 years. Why should I worry about condoms?

If you and your partner have both been tested for STIs, and your relationship is truly monogamous, you don't have to worry about using condoms. If either one of you has sex with another partner, condoms should be used every time with that other partner and with your primary partner. This holds true whether the outside relationship is conducted openly or secretly.

5. How do I insert and use the female condom? It looks uncomfortable!

Some of us remember using diaphragms for contraception; the female condom (also called a receptive or internal condom) is inserted very much the same way. It looks like a large condom with a removable ring inside and an external ring attached to the opening. It's made of nitrile – synthetic latex – so it's great for anyone with a latex allergy. The internal ring holds it in place in the vagina. You can insert it up to 8 hours before sex, so it needn't interrupt sex play. It can be used for anal sex without the inner ring. Lots of men really like these condoms because they free them from wearing a condom, add a lot of lubrication and can feel like nothing is being used!

Never use two condoms at the same time; doing so increases the risk of condom breakage.

About the Author: Joan Garrity has spent 30+ years nurturing the ability of healthcare and social service providers to be more effective in addressing sexuality issues with clients, young and old. Her highly engaging workshops provide concrete strategies participants can immediately apply to their work. Joan is on the Board of OWEL – Older Women Embracing Life – a network of senior women providing support and health related education to women and their families infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS.. www.joangarrity.com