

Sexual Health

CONTRACEPTIVE SPONGE



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A contraceptive sponge is a soft disposable foam sponge containing a spermicide that you place in the vagina before sexual intercourse to prevent pregnancy. It is 68-84% effective.

The contraceptive sponge does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STI).

How does it work?

- The polyurethane (non-latex) sponge fits over the cervix.
- The sponge traps and absorbs semen and the spermicide impairs the sperm.
- Effective for up to 12 hours.
- Insert into the vagina at least 15 minutes prior to intercourse. Make sure to follow package instructions.

Advantages

- Can be used by women who are breastfeeding.
- Can be used by women who smoke.
- One size fits all.
- Easy to use.
- Does not require a prescription.
- Can be used for multiple acts of intercourse within a twelve hour time period.
- Does not contain hormones.

Considerations

- Must be available at the time of intercourse.
- Must be left in place for 6 hours following last intercourse but no longer than 12 hours.
- Requires proper insertion technique.
- Spermicide contained in the sponge may cause vaginal irritation.
- Cannot be used by people who are allergic to spermicides.
- If left in the vagina longer than the recommended time, symptoms of toxic shock syndrome may occur.

Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Protection

The contraceptive sponge does not protect against STIs. Use a separate condom, dental dam, latex glove for each sex act.

Adapted with permission from the Middlesex London Health Unit.