Danger signs for TSS

- Sudden high fever
- Vomiting, diarrhea
- Dizziness, faintness, weakness
- Sore throat, aching muscles and joints
- Rash (like a sunburn)

Where can you get a diaphragm?

Getting a diaphragm requires an exam, a fitting and a prescription from a qualified health care provider. When you are fitted for your diaphragm, it is important that your provider instructs you in inserting and removing your diaphragm and gives you time to practice during your visit. Call your local family planning clinic for information.



www.cardeaservices.org

Diaphragm

How the diaphragm works

The diaphragm is a dome-shaped rubber (latex) cup with a stiff rim. It is used with a special gel or cream that contains a spermicide (a substance that kills sperm). The diaphragm and spermicide are inserted together into a woman's vagina and over her cervix to keep sperm from entering her uterus.

The diaphragm comes in different types and several sizes. A woman must be fitted for a diaphragm by a trained health provider.

How to use the diaphragm

- Empty your bladder (pee) and wash your hands.
- Squeeze about a tablespoon of spermicidal gel into the diaphragm cup and spread it around the rim.
- Insert the diaphragm into your vagina as instructed when it was fitted. The cup must cover the cervix.

Insert your finger into your vagina to check that the diaphragm is in place.

• The diaphragm can be inserted into the vagina up to six hours before sexual intercourse. It is effective



immediately. Leave the diaphragm in place for six hours after sex, but not longer than a total of 24 hours. Do not douche with the diaphragm in place.

- If you have sex more than once, add more spermicidal gel into the vagina each time before intercourse without taking the diaphragm out.
- To remove the diaphragm, slip a finger into your vagina and under the rim and gently slide it out.
- Check the diaphragm often for holes or weak spots, especially around the rim. Never use a diaphragm with a hole.
- Keep a supply of spermicidal gel on hand; check for an expiration date on each tube.
- The diaphragm should be refitted after a pregnancy (especially after a vaginal birth) and if you gain or lose 10 pounds.
- Do not use oil-based lubricants, such as hand lotion or petroleum jelly, as well as vaginal medications (e.g., for yeast infections) as they can damage your diaphragm.

Effectiveness

About 6 in 100 women will get pregnant in one year (94% effectiveness) if they use the diaphragm every time they have sex and use it correctly (perfect use). If they don't use the diaphragm every time they have sex, don't add more spermicidal gel with each act of intercourse, and/or it slips out of place, the chance of pregnancy goes up. Typical use is 16 out of 100 women may get pregnant in one year (84% effectiveness).

Benefits of the diaphragm

The diaphragm is a non-hormonal device and can be used only when needed, with very few side effects or major health risks. It can be put in place before sex and still be effective up to six hours later (adding more spermicide after two hours). Using the diaphragm does not require the direct involvement of a male partner and does not interrupt sex.

Potential side effects or disadvantages

Some people are allergic to latex rubber. Some people are allergic to spermicidal gel or cream; if this happens, try another brand. Planning ahead is required. You must be comfortable with inserting and removing the diaphragm.

Using the diaphragm will not give you protection against HIV (AIDS). In addition, studies of women who use the diaphragm differ in their reported reduction of gonorrhea, chalamydia, and trichomoniasis infection and, therefore, fail to demonstrate a proven risk reduction in sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Potential risks

Some women find that the diaphragm may cause bladder irritation or an increased risk of bladder infections. If you have any pain or discomfort, you should see your health care provider. Wearing a diaphragm for longer than 48 hours is not recommended because of possible risk of Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS). The diaphragm is not recommended for women who have had TSS.