

Safe Sex

As a sex worker your body is your tool of trade. It is important that you look after yourself and have the knowledge to conduct a safe and professional service. Understanding **safe sex** is part of this.

Safe sex is sex with no exchange of body fluids (in particular semen, blood, menstrual blood, vaginal fluids) and includes:

- ▶ Sexual contact without exchange of body fluids (i.e. 'outer course' or non-penetrative sex).
- ▶ Consistent and correct use of condoms and other safe sex supplies.

To improve the safety of sex:

Use male condoms for vaginal sex, anal sex and fellatio (oral sex performed on a man). It's important to know how to use them correctly to reduce risk of condom breakage:

- ▶ **Check the expiry date** on the packet.
- ▶ **Store them in a cool dry place** out of direct sunlight.
- ▶ **Always use water-based lubricants**, which will reduce the risk of your condom breaking during use. Apply freely to the condom once on and during sexual intercourse.
- ▶ **Never use oil-based lubricants** (e.g. Vaseline, cooking oils, massage oils, lotions), as these weaken condoms making them much more likely to break.
- ▶ **Use the correct size** of condom (keep a selection of different sizes).
- ▶ **Roll the condom onto the erect penis** – do not unroll before this.
- ▶ **Put the condom on before any genital contact.**
- ▶ **Always use a new condom** when you switch between two types of sexual activity, for example, from anal to vaginal sex.
- ▶ **Never reuse a condom.**

Use a dam placed over the woman's genitals for cunnilingus (oral sex performed on a woman) or for **oral-anal sex** (rimming). A split condom opened out will work, if you don't have a dam.

- ▶ **Check the expiry date** on the packet; also check the dam for any holes or tears.
- ▶ **Store dams in a cool dark place.** Do not store dams in the car, or keep them for any length of time in a wallet, purse or handbag.
- ▶ **Hold the dam against the vulva or anus** of the receiving partner.
- ▶ **Water-based lubricants are optional;** apply them to the vulva or anus before using the dam, this may increase sensation.
- ▶ **Never use oil-based lubricant** as this can degrade the latex and decrease the dam's effectiveness.
- ▶ **Only use one side of the dam** – don't flip the dam over, as you will expose yourself to the fluids you are trying to avoid!
- ▶ **Always use a new dam** on another body part (e.g. from anus to vulva and vice versa) because you can transfer germs from one body area to another.
- ▶ **Never re-use a dam.**

Use gloves for digital-rectal sex (fingering, fisting).

Use female condoms for vaginal sex.

- ▶ **Never re-use a female condom.**
- ▶ **Do not use male and female condoms together.**
- ▶ **Do not use female condoms for anal sex.**

Use condoms on sex toys, even though you clean them between clients.

You can't always tell by looking if someone has an STI – some STIs don't have any visible symptoms. Protecting yourself from STIs and unplanned pregnancy means practising **safe sex every time** you have sex – with clients and with partners. **Unsafe sex** is sex involving exchange of body fluids. You are at risk of STIs every time you have unsafe sex with someone if you don't know their sexual history. If you think you might have an STI, or might have been at risk of contracting an STI, **get tested!** Early diagnosis and treatment of an STI can help avoid complications and stop you passing it on to others. Click here for more information on staying safe, and where to go to get help [Queensland Health: Safe Sex](#) [FPQ: Contraception information](#)