

Tips for Providers: Helping Your Clients Use Female Condoms

It is very important that you positively promote the female condom (FC) as a safe and effective prevention tool and that you can properly demonstrate how to use it. Below are some tips to help you.

Avoid Mixed Messages

Any discomfort you might have about the FC will come through to your clients. It is important that you address any uncomfortable or negative feelings you might have, as well as any hang-ups around various sexual identities and behaviors, before you introduce FCs to your clients.

Take Your Time

Spend some time learning about the FC and familiarizing yourself with its proper use for vaginal and anal sex BEFORE you introduce it to your clients.

Anatomy 101

Make sure your clients understand the location and function of the following parts of anatomy: labia, vaginal canal, clitoris, cervix, urethra, uterus, rectum, and anus.

Our Bodies, Our Selves

Assess your client's comfort level with touching herself or himself. Does she use tampons? Is she comfortable with inserting her fingers into her vagina or her anus? Has she ever looked at her genitals in a mirror? What about men? Does he feel comfortable inserting a finger into his anus?

Three Times is the Charm

Emphasize the importance of practicing with the FC before using it with a partner. Let your client know that FC insertion can be tricky at first, but that it will become easier with practice.

Model This

Use a vagina model to demonstrate how to insert the FC. Then, have your client demonstrate it back to you. Since anal insertion is so similar, a vagina model can work for that demonstration as well.

Just One Gets it Done

Remind your client that FCs and male condoms are never to be used simultaneously. Using both types of condoms at the same time increases the likelihood of breakage.

Extra, Extra!

Encourage the use of extra lube inside the female condom and on the penis. Extra lube should be added to the inside of the female condom after insertion.

Keep on Talking

Follow up with clients and ask them about their experiences with the FC. This will allow you to troubleshoot any issues they may have experienced.

Q&A

Do a general review of birth control and safer sex methods. Ask them about their sexual health and provide referrals for things like HIV and STI testing, if necessary. The context in which your clients will be using the FC is important.

Helpful Catch Phrases

Three times is the charm.
If you like it, put a ring on it!
Just one gets it done.
Feel the heat.
The ring is the thing.