

SAFER SEX & HARM REDUCTION*

▶ ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

🕒 **Time:** 60 minutes

➔ **Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of prevention messages;
- Discuss options to increase safer sex choices.

★ **Training Methods:** Brainstorm, Demonstration, Game

✓ **In This Activity You Will...**

- Lead a discussion about safer sex (15 minutes)
- Discuss correct condom use and condom race game (15 minutes)
- Discuss other safer sex resources and activities (30 minutes)

✂ **Materials:**

- Newsprint, markers
- 2 cucumbers or condom demo models
- Safer Sex Kits for demo including condoms, female condoms, dental dams, latex gloves, and water-based lubricant
- Safer Sex Kits for Distribution (if possible)
- Box of latex gloves and bottle of lube

(continued next page)

Instructions

1. Ask “*What is safer sex?*” Safer sex means having sex in ways that make it less likely that the STDs and HIV can be passed between sex partners.
2. Ask “*What is harm reduction?*” Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies that reduce negative consequences of drug use, incorporating a spectrum of strategies from safer use, to managed use to abstinence. Harm reduction strategies meet drug users “where they’re at,” addressing conditions of use along with the use itself.
3. *What is on the market now that can help with reduction of risk of spreading HIV and STDS?*
4. *What are the safest behaviors?* (Acknowledge that it is not always realistic.):
 - Abstinence
 - Not sharing injection drug needles or “the works”.
 - Not using drugs.
5. The behaviors that have no risk of HIV:
 - Hugging
 - Massaging
 - Mutual masturbation
 - Clothed sex where no body fluids are shared
6. Some risk reducing behaviors IF you are engaging in high-risk behaviors:
 - Using latex condoms from start to finish, EVERY time, and using them correctly. If not all the time, then as much as possible.
 - Using water-based lubrication
 - Using dental dams and other materials from your Safer Sex Kit
 - Not sharing your “works,” needles, paraphernalia (like straws,

* This module comes from the Lotus Women’s Peer Education Training Manual, Center for Health Training and Women Organized to Respond to Life Threatening Diseases (WORLD), 2008.

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ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY (CONT.)

Materials (cont.):

Note: These handouts can be distributed as take-home resources:

- Handouts- Risk Meter
- Handout- How to Use a Condom
- Handout- How to Use a Female Condom
- Handout - How to Use Dental Dams and Other Latex Barriers
- Handout - 10 Things You Can Do to Practice Harm Reduction If You Use Drugs (can be found online at <http://www.thebody.com/content/art31296.html>)
- Handout - Project Inform's Safer Sex Handouts (can be downloaded from Project Inform website <http://www.projectinform.org/info/sex/sex.pdf>)

- ### **Preparation:** Print out handouts Assemble Safer Sex Kits

cookers, cotton), etc with ANYONE ELSE. If this is not possible then cleaning your “works” or needles with bleach and water (three times).

- Negotiating safer sex BEFORE you start to become sexually aroused.
 - Having oral sex which can be safer than vaginal or anal sex.
7. Condom Race:

Ask 4 people to come up to the front of the room. Two people will be blindfolded while the other two will hold the dildo or penis models or cucumbers. The blindfolded persons will be handed a condom after they have been spun around 3-4 times and will be asked to put the condom on their partner’s model. The 2 teams will race against each other. Facilitator will determine who has put it on correctly and explain the steps below.

Condoms

- a. Use a condom each and every time you have a sexual interaction.
- b. Handle the condom carefully, making sure not damage it with your teeth, fingernail, or other sharp object.
- c. Place the condom on a “hard” penis before it touches you anywhere near your vulva/vaginal area/down there. If the man is uncircumcised, roll down the foreskin before you put the condom on.
- d. If you use extra water-based lubrication, place some on the inside of the tip of the condom before placing the condom on the penis. Additional lubrication may be used on the outside of the condom and on the vaginal area; this helps if there is a break in the condom. Note that spermicides, Vaseline, oils, lotions, etc are not recommended. They can irritate the skin and create cuts in the skin and break latex condoms, allowing infections to spread.
- e. Do not pull the condom tightly against the tip of the penis.
- f. For a condom without a reservoir tip, leave a small empty space—about a half-inch—at the end of the condom to hold semen. Some condoms come equipped with a reservoir (nipple) tip that will hold semen.

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- g. Unroll the condom all the way to the bottom of the penis.
- h. If the condom breaks during intercourse, withdraw the penis immediately and put on a new condom and use more lubrication.
- i. After the guy ejaculates (comes), carefully withdraw the penis while it is still hard.
- j. Hold on to the rim of the condom as the penis is withdrawn from the vagina to prevent the condom from slipping off.
- k. Remove the condom carefully from the penis, making sure that semen doesn't leak out.
- l. Wrap the used condom in a tissue and discard it in the garbage. Do not flush it down the toilet, as condoms may cause problems in the sewers.
- m. Women are encouraged to wash their vaginas with warm water instead of douching or using other chemical materials.
- n. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- 8. Demonstrate other safer sex productions such as dental dams, gloves, finger cots, female condoms lubrications.

Latex Glyde/Dental Dams

Latex glyde/Dental dams are squares of latex used by dentists to isolate a particular tooth during dental procedures. They can usually be obtained at family planning clinics, women's clinics, or AIDS organizations. During sex, dams can be used over

the vagina or anus while it is being orally or manually stimulated. The following suggestions may help you with your latex dam:

- a. Before you try using a dam with a partner, experiment with it yourself. Try stretching it, tasting it, and rubbing it against your skin.
- b. You may want to wash the dam before using it to improve its flavor. Use a mild soap, and rinse it well.
- c. For increased sensitivity, consider using a water-based lubricant on the genital side of the dam.
- d. Because the dam may slip during use, keep track of which side is which. Consider keeping several dams nearby in case one slips off and you lose track of which side is which. Partners can take turns using it.
- e. Although you can wash dams thoroughly and reuse them once or twice, it is safer to discard them and use a fresh one each time.

Other Options Besides Dams

- a. Saran wrap or other plastic wrap of good quality can be used. Efficacy of this has not been tested, but it may provide similar protection to that of the dental dam. Do not expose it to heat or hot water. Do not reuse it. DO NOT USE the kind that says MICROWAVABLE or that is the stores' generic brand since it is usually made up of material that does not protect.
- b. A condom or latex gloves may be cut in half and used like a dam.
- c. In addition, finger cots (condoms for fingers) and latex gloves can be used if someone has open sores or cuts on their fingers.

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Other Safer Sex Items Demonstration

Other activities to do if have time:

1. Group stands in circle with gloves on both hands and hold hands. Ask how does that feel? Then put lube on everyone's hands and everyone holds hands again. Ask how does that feel? Activity shows that lube can really make it fun and it feels better.
2. Condom relay race. Put condom on dildo with mouth using no hands. Create 2-3 teams and race.

Summary

Wrap up session by reminding participants that it's very important for us, as role models, to have a positive attitude about safer sex.

* This module is part of the online toolkit *Building Blocks to Peer Success*. For more information, visit http://www.hdwg.org/peer_center/training_toolkit. This module comes from the Lotus Women's Peer Education Training Manual, Center for Health Training and Women Organized to Respond to Life Threatening Diseases (WORLD), 2008.

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SESSION HANDOUT # 1 of 4

RISK METER

Risk Meter (highest risk to the lowest risk) for passing HIV:

1. Sharing needles for drugs, medicine, hormones. – very high risk.
2. Receptive (receiving) anal sex without condom – very high risk. The lining of the rectum is very thin. It is damaged very easily during sexual activity. This makes it easier for HIV to enter the body.
3. Receptive (receiving) vaginal sex without condom – very high risk. The lining of the vagina is stronger than in the rectum, but it can still be damaged by sexual activity. All it takes is a tiny scrape that can be too small to see. The risk of infection is increased if there is any inflammation or infection in the vagina.
4. Insertive (giving) anal sex without condom – high risk. It's possible for HIV to enter the penis through any open sores, or through the moist lining of the opening of the penis.
5. Insertive (giving) vaginal sex without condom – high risk. It's possible for HIV to enter the penis through any open sores, or through the moist lining of the opening of the penis.
6. Oral sex – low risk. Risk is increased if there are bleeding gums, cuts, sores, lesions, ulcers or burns in the mouth. Other diseases such as syphilis can be transmitted through oral sex.
7. Sharing sex toys – low risk. It is recommended that toys be cleaned between users.

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SESSION HANDOUT # 2 of 4

HOW TO USE A CONDOM

1. Use a condom every time you have a sexual interaction. Make sure the condom has not been stored in a warm place (in a car, pocket, etc). Heat can damage the condom.
2. Check the expiration date on the back of the condom.
3. Handle the condom carefully, making sure not to damage it with your teeth, fingernail or other sharp object.
4. Place the condom on a “hard” penis before it touches anywhere near your vaginal area. If the man is uncircumcised, roll down the foreskin before you put the condom on.
5. Do not pull the condom tightly against the tip of the penis.
6. For a condom without a reservoir tip, leave a small empty space-about a half-inch-at the end of the condom to hold semen. Some condoms come equipped with a reservoir (nipple) tip that will hold semen.
7. Unroll the condom all the way to the bottom of the penis. Add lubricant on the top of the condom, if needed.
8. If the condom breaks during intercourse, withdraw the penis immediately and put on a new condom and use more lubricant.
9. After the guy ejaculates (comes),carefully withdraw the penis while it is still hard.
10. Hold on to the rim of the condom as the penis is withdrawn from the vagina to prevent the condom from slipping off.
11. Remove the condom carefully from the penis, making sure that semen does not leak out.
12. Wrap the used condom in a tissue and discard it in the garbage. Do not flush it down the toilet, as condoms may cause problems in the sewers. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.



1-2



3-4



5-7



8-12

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SESSION HANDOUT # 3 of 4

HOW TO USE A FEMALE CONDOM

1. Open the package carefully; tear at the notch on the top right of the package. Do not use scissors or a knife to open.
2. The outer ring covers the area around the opening of the vagina. The inner ring is used for insertion and to help hold the sheath in place during intercourse.
3. While holding the sheath at the closed end, grasp the flexible inner ring and squeeze it with the thumb and second or middle finger so it becomes long and narrow.
4. Choose a position that is comfortable for insertion – squat, raise one leg, sit or lie down.
5. Gently insert the inner ring into the vagina. Feel the inner ring go up and move into place.
6. Place the index finger on the inside of the condom, and push the inner ring up as far as it will go. Be sure the sheath is not twisted. The outer ring should remain on the outside of the vagina.
7. The female condom is now in place and ready for use with your partner.
8. When you are ready, gently guide your partner's penis into the sheath's opening with your hand to make sure that it enters properly – be sure that the penis is not entering on the side, between the sheath and the vaginal wall.
9. To remove the condom, twist the outer ring and gently pull the condom out.
10. Wrap the condom in the package or in tissue, and throw it in the garbage. Do not put it into the toilet.

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SESSION HANDOUT # 4 of 4

HOW TO USE A DENTAL DAM OR OTHER LATEX BARRIERS

Dental dams or Glyde dams are squares of latex. They can usually be obtained at family planning clinics, women's clinics, or AIDS organizations. During sex, dams can be used over the outside of the vagina or anus while it is being orally or manually stimulated.

The following suggestions may help you with your dental dam:

1. Before you try using a dam with a partner, experiment with it yourself. Try stretching it, tasting it, and rubbing it against your skin.
2. You may want to wash the dam before using it to improve its flavor. Use a mild soap, and rinse it well.
3. For increased sensitivity, consider using a water-based lubricant to the side of the dam that will be put against the genitals.
4. Because the dam may slip during use, keep track of which side is which. Consider keeping several dams nearby in case one slips off and you lose track of which side is which. Partners can take turns using it.
5. Although you can wash dams thoroughly and reuse them once or twice, it is safer to discard them and use a fresh one each time.

Other options other than dental dams:

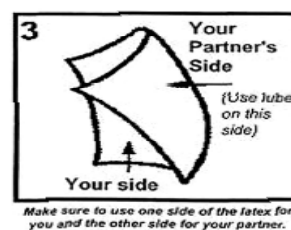
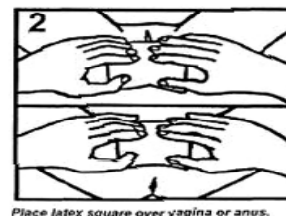
1. Plastic wrap. This has not been scientifically tested, but it may provide similar protection to that of the dental dam. Do not expose it to heat or hot water. Do not reuse it. Non-microwaveable plastic wrap is recommended.
2. A condom or a latex glove may be cut in half and used like a dental dam.
3. Finger cots (condoms for fingers) and latex gloves can be used if someone has open sores or cuts on their fingers. They will also provide extra protection against genital warts and other STD's.

USING LATEX BARRIERS

Latex dams (also known as "dental dams" or "barriers") are flat squares of latex rubber which are laid against the vagina or anus before oral sex (mouth to vagina sex or mouth to anus sex). Both men and women use latex dams. The mouth should not come in direct contact with the vagina or anus. When used properly, latex dams can help prevent the spread of HIV (the virus which causes AIDS), and some sexually transmitted diseases.

When you have oral sex, remember to keep "tongue on one side, lube on the other." Use only water-based lubricants like K-Y Jelly, wet, Forplay, etc.

Another alternative is plastic wrap (like Saran Wrap). This may be used as a protective barrier; however, the effectiveness of plastic products as a barrier to HIV transmission has not been scientifically proven.



Making Your Own Latex Barrier

Dental dams are often available at medical supply stores, some pharmacies, and sex shops. If you can't find dental dams, here are a couple of ways to make one:

1. Unroll an unlubricated condom and cut off the tip, then cut up along one side.
 2. Unfold and put water-based lube on the side facing the vagina or anus.
1. Take a latex glove and cut off all four fingers (not the thumb) and cut along the outside (by the pinky).
 2. Now you have a latex barrier. You can stick your tongue in the thumb area!