

# Diaphragm Fact Sheet

## WHAT'S INSIDE:

- ❖ **What is** diaphragm?
- ❖ How do I **use** it?
- ❖ How do I **get** it?
- ❖ How **effective** is it?
- ❖ **Advantages** of the diaphragm
- ❖ **Drawbacks** of the diaphragm

## SOURCES:

Office on Women's Health

- ❖ [Girlshealth.gov: Types of Birth Control](http://girlshealth.gov/types_of_birth_control)
- ❖ [Birth Control Methods: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- ❖ [Unintended Pregnancy Prevention: Contraception](#)

Food and Drug Administration

- ❖ [Birth Control Guide](#)

### What is diaphragm?

The diaphragm is a round, dome-shaped flexible cup made of latex rubber.



### How do I use it?

The diaphragm is placed inside the vagina and works by covering the cervix to prevent sperm from meeting with and fertilizing an egg. Before it is inserted into the vagina, the inside of the diaphragm must be covered with a special jelly that kills sperm (called spermicide). The diaphragm must fit tight against the cervix to work.

To prevent pregnancy it is important to leave the diaphragm in place at least six hours, but remove it within 24 hours, after having sex. Use more spermicide each time you have sex but do not remove the diaphragm if it has not been in place six hours since having sex.



### How do I get it?

Diaphragms come in different sizes so see your health care provider for a proper fit. You might need a different-sized diaphragm if you gain or lose more than 15 pounds or if you have a baby.

After determining which size you need, your health care provider will give you a prescription. You can get both the diaphragm and the spermicidal jelly at a pharmacy.

To search for a family planning clinic near you, go to <http://www.opaclearinghouse.org/search/>.

### How effective is it?

Of 100 women who use this method each year, about 15 are likely to get pregnant. The risk of pregnancy is much less for women who use the diaphragm the right way (with spermicide), and who use it each time they have sex.





### Advantages of the diaphragm

- ❖ The diaphragm is effective, safe, and easy to use
- ❖ It can be inserted several hours before having sex
- ❖ The diaphragm is controlled by the female and does not require the consent of her partner



### Drawbacks of the diaphragm

- ❖ Does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- ❖ If left inside the vagina longer than 24 hours, may result in irritation, allergic reaction, infection or, in rare instances, toxic shock syndrome
- ❖ Requires a clinic visit and prescription
- ❖ May need to be fitted again following childbirth or weight loss or gain



### Quick Facts

#### Effectiveness in Preventing Pregnancy

- ❖ Of 100 women who use this method each year, about 15 are likely to get pregnant

#### Use

- ❖ Must be coated with a special jelly that kills sperm (called spermicide) and inserted inside the vagina before having sex
- ❖ It must remain in place for at least six hours after sex
- ❖ More spermicide is needed each time you have sex. Remove diaphragm with 24 hours

#### STI Protection

- ❖ No

#### Clinic Visit Required

- ❖ Yes, diaphragms require a prescription, come in different sizes, and must be fitted by a health care professional

