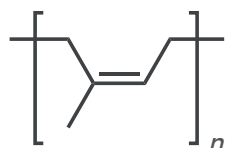


# THE CHEMISTRY OF CONDOMS

## WHAT ARE CONDOMS MADE FROM?

Male condoms are commonly made from latex. To avoid latex allergies, polyurethane condoms can be used instead; polyisoprene condoms are also available. Female condoms are made from polyurethane or nitrile rubber.

1855



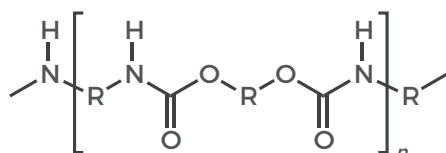
RUBBER

1920

A milky fluid mixture obtained from plants which contains rubber.

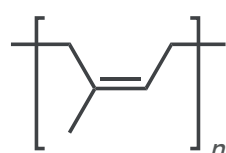
RUBBER LATEX

1994



POLYURETHANE

2008



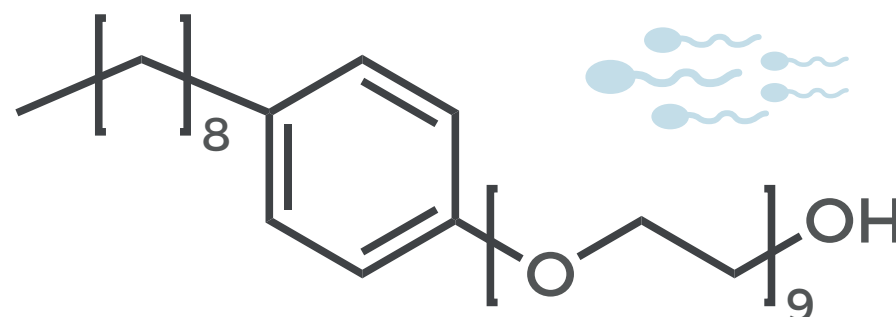
POLYISOPRENE

(synthetic rubber)

Condoms protect against both pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Studies show that polyurethane condoms are slightly more prone to breakage than latex ones.



## SPERMICIDES

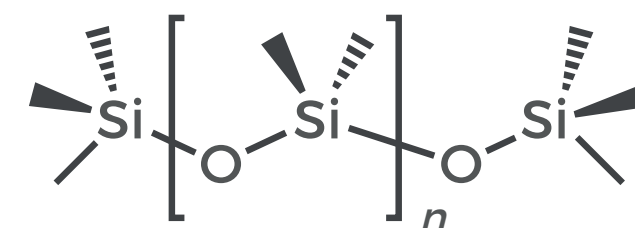


NONOXYNOL-9

Many condoms were often coated with lubricants containing nonoxynol-9, a spermicide. In 2001 the World Health Organisation concluded there was no evidence that this coating gave additional protection against pregnancy or STDs.

## LUBRICANTS & OTHER COMPOUNDS

Lubricants are usually silicone-based or water-based. Oil-based lubricants should not be used with latex condoms as they can drastically reduce their strength.

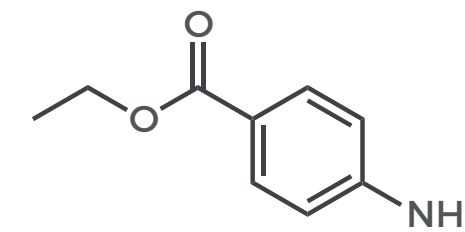


POLYDIMETHYLSILOXANE (PDMS)

a common type of silicone in lubricants

Some lubricants used on the inside of condoms contain small amounts of the anaesthetic, benzocaine. It has a numbing effect that prevents premature ejaculation.

BENZOCAINE



Another condom brand has an 'erectogenic' gel (based on nitroglycerin) in the tip. The gel increases blood flow into the penis.

