

## Cervical Barriers: Diaphragms/Cervical Caps

### How:

The diaphragm is a small rubber cup that you fill with contraceptive gel. You place it in your vagina to cover your cervix. Other cervical barriers (the cap) are like the diaphragm, but smaller. These methods prevent sperm from getting into your uterus and meeting an egg. There are two types: one that comes in many sizes and needs to be fitted by your healthcare provider and one that fits women of all sizes.

### When:

You can insert the diaphragm or cervical cap with contraceptive gel a few hours before you have sex. They must stay in place for at least six hours after sex but should not stay in the vagina any longer than 24 hours.

### Where:

Your healthcare provider fits one type of diaphragm or cervical cap and teaches you how to use it. Another diaphragm (Caya<sup>®</sup>) is one-size-fits-all and is shaped to fit any woman's body. It is easy to fold and insert and you can get it at the store or clinic.

### Advantages:

Your partner will not be able to feel the diaphragm if it's put in right. No hormones or chemicals are absorbed into your body. Diaphragms do not change your period and you can safely breastfeed your baby.



Diaphragms are reused but must be cared for and cleaned.

### Disadvantages:

The diaphragm must always be inserted the right way before you have sex. You have to plan ahead to use it. You might need a new size diaphragm after having a baby or losing or gaining a lot of weight.

### Side effects:

A few people are allergic to the rubber or contraceptive gel. If you have itching or burning, talk to your health care provider.

### Risks:

There are no serious health risks in using a diaphragm. Using nonoxynol-9 spermicides might increase your risk of giving or getting HIV. Diaphragms and cervical barriers do not protect you against STDs. You can use a condom with a diaphragm. Keeping your diaphragm in for longer than 24 hours can cause bacteria to grow in the vagina which can lead to toxic shock syndrome. The diaphragm

should be taken out 6 hours after having sex.

**Effectiveness:**

Less than 6 out of 100 women will get pregnant each year if they always use the diaphragm the right way.

About 12 out of 100 women will get pregnant each year if they don't always use the diaphragm the right way.