



Published on *Go Ask Alice!* (<https://goaskalice.columbia.edu>)

[Home](#) > Are thinner or ultra sensitive condoms as effective as regular ones?

---

## Are thinner or ultra sensitive condoms as effective as regular ones? <sup>[1]</sup>

Dear Alice,

I was just wondering about the difference in effectiveness between "ultra sensitive" and regular condoms. I imagine there is a greater chance of breakage with thin condoms, right? Sorry if this is a silly question, but for some reason, I thought I heard that there wasn't a significant difference.

— Wondering

### **Answer**

Dear Wondering,

A variety of tests are used to determine the quality and safety of condoms, including testing package integrity, lubricant quality, leakage, and stretchiness/strength. Doesn't "Professional Condom Tester" sound like a sexy job title? Unfortunately (or maybe fortunately) all the testing is done with machines. Both regular latex and ultra-thin latex condoms have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) <sup>[2]</sup>, to ensure safety and effectiveness.

Furthermore, Consumer Reports also rated 23 types of latex condoms currently on the market, and all passed minimum industry standards. They found no correlation between performance and price, thickness, or the country where condoms were made. In fact, some of the ultra-sensitive condoms received top ratings for strength and reliability.

Manufacturers screen every condom as part of the manufacturing process by passing an electric current through the latex to test for tiny holes or weak spots. As such, condom breakage due to poor manufacturing quality is extremely rare. Condom failure is almost always due to user error.

Following these guidelines when using any kind of condom will help avoid blowouts or slip-ups:

- Keep the condoms out of direct sunlight and away from exposure to high temperatures.
- Check expiration dates.
- Make sure the package is sealed and has no holes — make sure you can feel an air pocket in each package.

- Open the package right before you need it, and use your fingers (not your teeth, which can tear the condom).
- Stick with water- or silicone-based lubes rather than oil-based ones.

Thanks for asking. No question is silly, and wanting to be wise about which condoms are safe makes you a better lover!

Alice!

Category:

[Sexual & Reproductive Health](#) [3]

[Contraception](#) [4]

[Condoms](#) [5]

## Related questions

[Differences between polyurethane and latex condoms](#) [6]

[When's the right time to put on a condom?](#) [7]

[Types of condoms](#) [8]

## Resources

[Safer Sex Map \(Morningside/ Barnard\)](#) [9]

[Alice! Health Promotion \(Morningside\)](#) [10]

[Center for Student Wellness \(CUIMC\)](#) [11]

Published date:

Jan 19, 2001

Last reviewed on:

Jun 12, 2015

## Footer menu

### ▼ [Contact Alice!](#)

- [Content Use](#)
- [Media Inquiries](#)
- [Comments & Corrections](#)

### ▼ [Syndication & Licensing](#)

- [Licensing Q&As](#)
- [Get Alice! on Your Website](#)
- [Full Site Syndication](#)
- [Link to Go Ask Alice!](#)

**Go Ask Alice! is not an emergency or instant response service.**

If you are in an urgent situation, please [visit our Emergency page](#) to view a list of 24 hour support

services and hotlines.

---

**Source URL:** <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/are-thinner-or-ultra-sensitive-condoms-effective-regular-ones>

### Links

- [1] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/are-thinner-or-ultra-sensitive-condoms-effective-regular-ones>
- [2] <http://www.fda.gov/>
- [3] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/sexual-reproductive-health>
- [4] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/contraception>
- [5] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/condoms>
- [6] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/differences-between-polyurethane-and-latex-condoms-0>
- [7] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/whens-right-time-put-condom-0>
- [8] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/types-condoms>
- [9] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/resource/safer-sex-map-morningside-barnard>
- [10] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/resource/alice-health-promotion-morningside>
- [11] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/resource/center-student-wellness-cuimc>