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[Home](#) > Condom broke and I'm worried about it happening again

Condom broke and I'm worried about it happening again ^[1]

Dear Alice,

Recently, during intercourse, my condom broke. Now, of course, I am very worried about it happening again. I am constantly checking the condom during sex and find that the condom is extremely tight against the tip of my penis whenever I check. I am afraid it will get tight again and break. I'm not sure what to do or where to go. Is the condom supposed to be very tight at the tip or not? Any help would be great.

Thanks,

M

Answer

Dear M,

When worn properly, a condom will have about half an inch of space between the tip of your penis and the top of the condom. This space creates a reservoir for the semen after ejaculation. To create this half inch space, place the rolled up condom over the tip of your penis when it is hard. Then, while pinching the condom at the tip, roll the rest of it down your penis with the other hand. Or, you can always include your partner — one can hold the tip while the other rolls.

Pinching the condom also forces any air out of the tip. Once the condom is on, you can take extra precaution by smoothing out any air bubbles — another common culprit in condom breaks. You can also add a dab of silicone- or water-based lube to reduce any friction that can affect the condom's strength. Test driving different condom brands may help you find one or two that fit comfortably and feel reliable. If you continue to find that several different condom brands are too tight, you may consider trying different sizes. For more information, read [Condom sizes... how do I know what fits?](#) ^[2]

In the event of a condom breakage, it's always good to know your options. If your're concerned about a potential pregnancy and your partner was not using another method of birth control (like the birth control pill), they can take [emergency contraception \(EC\)](#) ^[3]. If taken within 72 hours after sex, it's about 89 percent effective at preventing pregnancy, but it may still be effective for

up to five days (120 hours). Plan B One-Step® and the generic one-pill formulations of EC are available without a prescription or proof-of-age at pharmacies and drug stores. If you're concerned about sexually transmitted infections (STIs), it may be wise to set up an appointment with a health care provider to be tested (you may encourage your partner to do the same). This may be a good idea regardless of any symptoms being present, because many STIs are asymptomatic — but that doesn't mean that they can't be transmitted to another person.

In the future, feeling confident that the condom is on correctly, you'll probably worry less about it breaking. This will leave you more time to enjoy the pleasure of sex. For more information on condom safety, check out [How to use a condom correctly — Avoid breakage or slippage](#) [4].

Keep it sexy — keep it safe!

Alice!

Category:

[Sexual & Reproductive Health](#) [5]

[Contraception](#) [6]

[Condoms](#) [7]

Related questions

[When's the right time to put on a condom?](#) [8]

[Emergency contraception?](#) [9]

Resources

[Medical Services \(Morningside\)](#) [10]

[Medical Services \(CUIMC\)](#) [11]

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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!](#)

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Links

- [1] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/condom-broke-and-im-worried-about-it-happening-again>
- [2] <http://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/condom-sizes-how-do-i-know-what-fits-0>
- [3] <http://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/emergency-contraception>
- [4] <http://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/how-use-condom-properly-%E2%80%94-avoid-breakage-and-slippage-0>
- [5] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/sexual-reproductive-health>
- [6] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/contraception>
- [7] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/condoms>
- [8] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/whens-right-time-put-condom-0>
- [9] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/emergency-contraception-19>
- [10] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/resource/medical-services-morningside>
- [11] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/resource/medical-services-cuimc>