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Condom sizes... how do I know what fits? ^[1]

Dear Alice,

In my shopping and looking for condoms, I NEVER come across a formal size chart. I have been told that I was "endowed" and that I need to look toward larger sized models, but all I ever see is "snug fit," "large," and "extra large," etc. How big is big? It would be most helpful if I knew what I was buying before I actually bought it. Do you know of the sizes of some popular condoms, or of a size chart resource?

Thanks,
Endowed

Answer

Dear Endowed,

That certainly is a question that may have implications for your level of comfort and your health. A good fit can't be underestimated; a poorly-fitting condom can undermine its effectiveness in preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancy, as well as interfere with the pleasure and sensations for both you and your partner during sex. The good news is, given the number of brands and varieties of condoms ^[2] on the market, there's bound to be one for you.

Figuring out the size of your penis will help you determine the best condoms for you. A length anywhere from five to seven inches when erect is considered average, with the most common penis length falling somewhere around six inches when erect. It's also good to know that condoms are meant to have a little extra space at the tip to allow room for the ejaculate (cum). If a condom is too short, some STIs could be transmitted between the exposed part of the penis and the partner through skin-to-skin contact. Penis girth (circumference) also affects how a condom fits. The average penis girth is four-and-a-half to five inches. If your penis girth is above average, a standard sized condom might feel uncomfortably tight so the larger sized condoms may be appropriate for you. For readers whose penis length or girth is less than average, standard condoms may slip off during sex — so snug fit condoms (which are a bit, well, snugger) may be a good option for these people.

To find out "how big is big" or where you fall along the penis size continuum, you may want to

measure your erect penis. For length, you'll want to measure from the point where the penis joins the body along the shaft to the tip of the head. To measure penis circumference/girth, use a tape measure or a piece of string at the widest point of the penis. You can easily do this yourself or spice it up and have your partner help out!

It might take a few tries before you find the condom that fits you best, so don't be afraid to shop around. Some sex toy stores may let you buy single condoms or an assortment of condoms so you may try out different options without buying a whole box, saving you time and money. You can also buy condoms at places like drugstores, grocery stores, and even online! But read closely: larger or smaller condoms may appear to be the same size, but measurements from brand to brand may differ. Just because you're a certain size in one brand doesn't mean you'll be the same size in another.

Kudos for asking about how to get the best fit for you! If you'd like to read more, head over to the [Condoms](#) [3] category in the *Go Ask Alice!* [Sexual & Reproductive Health](#) [4] archives.

Enjoy and good luck!

Alice!

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