

Cervical Cap

The cervical cap is a deep silicone cap that fits against the cervix and prevents sperm and bacteria from entering.

How does it work?

- The cervical cap serves as a physical barrier between sperm and the cervix.
- It should always be used with a gel that immobilizes or kills sperm. The gel forms a physical cellulose barrier in front of the cervix and lowers the pH of the vaginal fluid, thereby inhibiting sperm motility.
- The cap can be inserted into the vagina by the women using it up to 2 hours before having sex.
- The gel should be reapplied, using an applicator, for each repeated act of intercourse or after 2 hours has passed.
- It should be left in the vagina for at least 6 hours after intercourse but should not remain in the vagina for more than 48 hours total.
- Cervical caps can be purchased online or from a pharmacy with a prescription. It should be replaced every year.

How effective is it?

- There is currently no data on the efficacy/ effectiveness of the only cervical cap and gel that is available in Canada. Some preliminary studies have shown that the cervical cap has a higher failure rate compared to other types of contraception.



Advantages

- + No hormones
- + Can be used by women who are breastfeeding
- + Available in three different sizes

Disadvantages

- Higher failure rate compared to other types of contraception
- Increased risk of recurrent urinary tract infections
- Increased risk of toxic shock syndrome
- Some women may have trouble inserting it correctly
- Gel must be reapplied after each act of intercourse
- A poor fit or silicone allergy will prevent some women from using the cap
- Does not protect against STIs