



Condoms

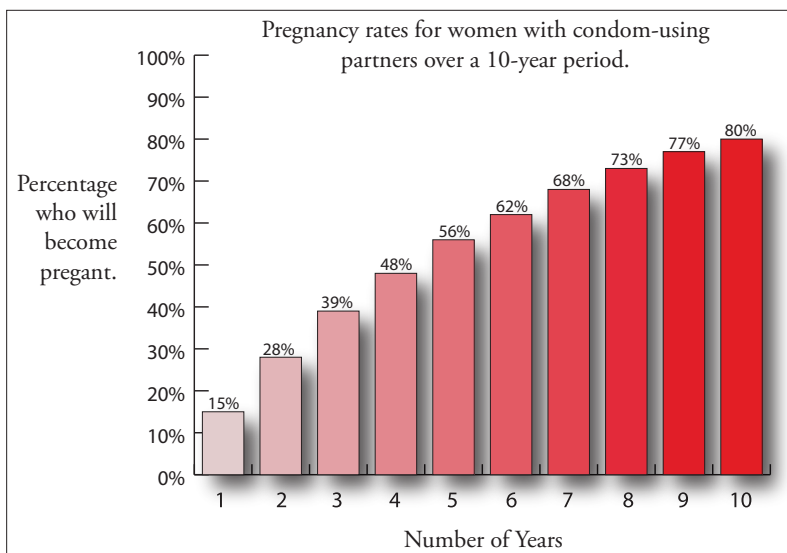
Little-Known Scientific Facts

1. Condoms fail for regular users: The condom is the most commonly used barrier method of contraception in the world. Yet according to mainstream scientific sources, its efficacy has been grossly overstated by its promoters. After the use of just 10 condoms, the probability of at least one failure is 57%, according to the authoritative *Contraceptive Technology*. The book's authors tallied the results of 15 studies of condoms used during heterosexual intercourse and found that 4.6% of all of the condoms broke and 3.4% of them partially or completely slipped off, and found a total failure rate of 8.1%. That means that about 1 in 12 condom uses results in failure. Failure results in exposure to all the sexually-transmitted diseases that a partner has and may result in pregnancy. Even the highest-quality condoms used in the most effective manner possible by educated, monogamous, adult couples fail at a high rate under real-world conditions.

2. Condoms mean exposure to disease: Because of high failure rate of condoms, sexually active youths and adults who rely on them are, practically speaking, certain to be exposed to disease on a regular basis unless their partners are disease-free. And if their partners are disease-free, there is no need to use condoms for disease protection. Studies have found that condom use can decrease the chance of transmitting HIV from an HIV-positive partner to an HIV-negative partner by 75% if the partners are monogamous, still leaving a substantial risk. Condoms are less effective in preventing the spread of HIV when used by those who engage in high-risk behaviors such as promiscuity or

sodomy. Condoms cannot protect against diseases spread by skin-to-skin contact such as herpes and HPV. Even other diseases against which condoms are most effective still present significant risks. The infection rate of syphilis drops from 1.86% to 0.65% with condom use, and that of gonorrhea drops from 15% to 8%. Condoms are even less effective against most other STDs.

3. Condoms mean pregnancy over time: Within a year, 15% of sexually active women whose partners use condoms for contraception become pregnant, according to *Contraceptive Technology* and other top scientific sources. After two years, this means 28% have a pregnancy. After three years, it's 39%. After four years, it's 48%. After five years, it's 56%. These figures are derived from studies of committed adult couples using new and properly-stored condoms which have not been allowed to degrade; the numbers for youth, for women with multiple partners, and for poor and Third World people using expired or improperly-stored condoms are likely worse. The high failure rate of condoms means consistent leakage over time, inevitably making many episodes of sexual intercourse with condoms equivalent to sex without condoms.



4. Condom promoters employ irrelevant evidence: The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other global condom promoters claim that condoms have a 98% success rate instead of the 85% success rate documented in real-world studies. The 98% success rate is based on the ideal use of condoms every

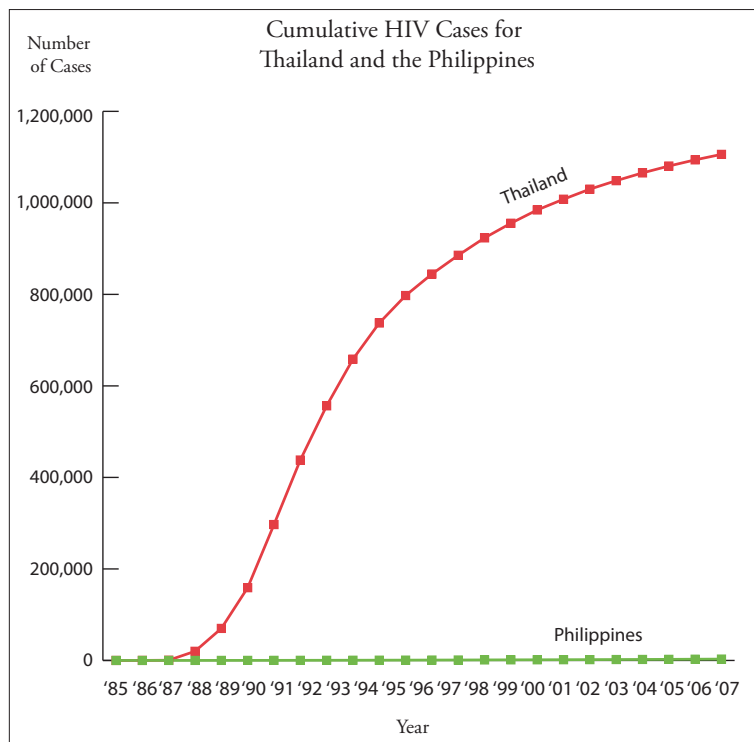
time by well-trained and highly disciplined adults under monitoring by scientists. What is relevant is the success rate of condoms by average people, who sometimes fail to put on condoms properly or replace them immediately when they break in the heat of the moment, in the real world over time. Even studies of trained, committed adult couples using new and properly-stored condoms find a real-world pregnancy prevention success rate of 85% over a 12-month period. Unmarried teenagers, often the targets of condom promoters, almost certainly have a far worse record.

5. Condoms haven't stopped AIDS epidemics: In Third World countries that have made condom use their primary AIDS prevention strategy, HIV infection rates have continued to rise or, at best, have not dropped significantly. In 2004, the journal *Studies in Family Planning* concluded, "No clear examples have emerged yet of a country that has turned back a generalized epidemic primarily by means of condom promotion." Yet the United Nations, the European Union and its member countries, some U.S. agencies, and international organizations continue to promote condom use as the primary method of combating the spread of HIV and other STDs. Not only do condoms fail regularly even when used consistently and properly, people do not like them. According to the March 2004 "Bulletin of the World Health Organization," 44% of married couples who start using condoms for birth control stop using them within a year. Despite this, and despite its own admission that the failure rate of condoms for pregnancy-prevention is 50% higher than that of the Pill, the bulletin recommended that birth control promoters attempt to convince married couples to switch to condoms from the

Pill. The bulletin did not cite the many health problems caused by the Pill, including increased risk of STDs, as reasons for switching, but HIV prevention.

6. Abstinence and monogamy stop AIDS: Uganda, whose president and first lady chose to highlight abstinence and monogamy instead of condoms in their nation's AIDS prevention efforts, has by far the best record in combating HIV in the Third World. Uganda's ABC program—Abstinence first, Be faithful in a relationship, and use Condoms if you're not—reduced the adult HIV infection rate from 18% to 7%. The Philippines has chosen to emphasize abstinence and monogamy while deemphasizing condoms, and her HIV rate remains a low 113 per million people, according to the United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Thailand, a country with a similar-sized population in the same region of the world, has emphasized condom use and has an HIV infection rate 80 times higher.

7. It's not working: Almost everyone is aware of the massive campaign to promote condom use that has gone on for decades, including the free distribution of condoms by the millions through schools and health clinics. Obviously, it's not working. Teen pregnancy in the U.S. is still at sky-high levels (750,000 annually) despite a drop in recent years due to a rise in chastity; over 1 million abortions are performed each year in the United States; and STD rates have reached record levels. Half of the 19 million new STD infections each year in America are among 15-to-24-year-olds, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The CDC says that 25% of teen girls now have an STD, including 40% of those who say they have had sex.



For more information, please visit www.hli.org/condoms.html

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