

SPERMICIDAL CREAM, GEL, SUPPOSITORIES FOAM OR FILM

(Based on Managing Contraception Pocket Guide 2019-2020)

Effectiveness:

- 82% with perfect use
- 72% with typical use

Action: Act as barriers to prevent entry of sperm into the female's upper vagina. Spermicides also act like chemicals that kill the sperm.

Advantages/Benefits:

- Either partner can purchase and apply; requires no medical visit
- Lubrication may heighten satisfaction for either partner
- Ease in application prior to sexual intercourse
- Available over the counter, inexpensive and easy to use
- Foam and spermicidal jelly are immediately active with placement
- More effective when used with a condom or diaphragm
- May be used as a back-up method; may be used during lactation
- Safe, no hormones involved

Disadvantages/Risks:

- No protection against HIV, GC or chlamydia (use a condom if you or your partner are at risk)
- May be irritating to the vagina, and some people may feel it is messy
- Must feel comfortable placing an applicator into the vagina to release the spermicide
- You cannot always be sure there is enough foam left in the can for protection during the next intercourse (so, keep an extra can on hand)
- Possible vaginal, oral, and anal irritation can disrupt or preclude sex; taste may be unpleasant
- Does not provide as much protection as many other birth control methods (strongly consider using with a diaphragm or condom)

Instructions:

- Consider use with a condom or diaphragm to increase effectiveness
- Film and suppositories should be inserted into the vagina, on or near the cervix, not more than an hour but at least 15 minutes before intercourse
- Wash your hands with soap and water before inserting the film, and make sure your hands are dry to keep the film from sticking to your fingers
 - With foam, film, suppositories need to finish sexual intercourse within 60 minutes of application