

Spermicides

What are spermicides?

Spermicides are a type of contraceptive or birth control that is inserted into the vagina before any genital contact occurs or sexual intercourse begins. They are found as foams, jellies, tablets, creams, suppositories, or dissolvable films.

How do spermicides work?

They work by killing sperm in the vagina. Therefore, the sperm are not able to travel from the vagina into the uterus and fallopian tubes, where fertilization takes place.

Do spermicides contain hormones?

No, there are no hormones in spermicides.

How effective are spermicides?

Spermicides used alone are about 70% to 80% effective, but when used with another form of birth control such as condoms, spermicides are about 97% effective in preventing pregnancy.

Do spermicides prevent STDs?

No, they do not prevent STDs. Irritation or small tears of the genital tissue may allow for easier transmission of HIV and other STDs. If irritation of the vagina or penis develops, discontinue use.

How should spermicides be used?

A spermicide in any form should be placed deeply inside the vagina. Instructions are different for each type, so read the label carefully before use. Some types of spermicides, like tablets and films, should be in place at least 10 minutes before intercourse in order to be effective.

With any spermicide, don't insert it more than one hour before having sex.

Spermicides should remain in the vagina at least 6 hours after sex.

Are spermicides available at SHC?

No, but they are readily available at most pharmacies and grocery stores where condoms are sold.