Given the page contains facts about condoms, here is a structured summary:

**FACT SHEET: Condoms**

Before using condoms, you need to know the advantages and disadvantages. You are encouraged to read this information. A Nurse Practitioner is always available to answer any questions you may have.

Condoms are barriers. Condoms fit over the erect penis and prevent sperm from entering the vagina. Condoms are made from latex, polyurethane, or lambskin. Condoms can also be used to reduce the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

**BENEFITS:**
- Dual Protection: Condoms offer the benefit of both reducing the risk of pregnancy and transmission of STDs.
- Pregnancy Prevention: When used correctly with every act of intercourse condoms have a 2% failure rate. With typical use (use which is inconsistent), condoms have a 15% failure rate.
- Condoms are commonly used as a back-up method of birth control. Using two methods of birth control (e.g., using pills and condoms) improves your chances of not getting pregnant.

**Advantages:**
- Condoms are widely available without a prescription;
- There is no age restriction on who may purchase condoms;
- Condoms are inexpensive;
- Condoms can be used for vaginal, anal, or oral sex.

**RISKS:**
- There are no serious risks associated with condom use. The biggest risks come with NOT using condoms during sexual activity.

**Disadvantages:**
- Some people are allergic or sensitive to latex, polyurethane, lambskin, or the spermicidal lubricant added to some condoms. Signs of allergy/sensitivity include burning, itching, rashes, redness, or swelling of the areas touched by the condom or spermicide. Rarely, a severe, overall body reaction to latex.
- Spermicidal coating added to condoms does not improve the effectiveness of condoms but does increase your chance of irritation. Use non-spermicidal lubricated condoms.
- Lambskin condoms are effective for pregnancy prevention but not for STD prevention.

**How to use a condom:**
1. Use a new condom for each act of sexual activity.
2. The condom must be put on the erect penis before there is any contact.
3. After you have an erect penis, check the condom for the proper way it unrolls and roll the condom onto the erect penis all the way to the base. Remember to leave a ½” reservoir tip for the ejaculate.
4. After ejaculation, withdraw the penis while it is still hard making sure to hold the condom at the base of the penis as it is pulled out. This will help to keep the semen in the condom and prevent any spilling. With the penis away from your partner, remove the condom. Tie the condom in a knot and dispose of it in a trash receptacle.

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**Good to Know:**

- Condoms should be stored in a cool, dry place. Do not expose condoms to excess heat. Condoms should also not be frozen.
- Check the package expiration date. Do not use expired condoms.
- Check the package and condom for tears and make sure the package has an air-tight seal.
- Have more than one condom available.
- Make sure you are using condoms that specifically state they will help prevent pregnancy, STDs, and HIV.
- Use lubrication to reduce the friction and lower the risk of the condom breaking. Use only water-based lubricants (Astroglide, Slippery Stuff, K-Y Liquid, ID, and Wet are all good brands).
- Using a spermicide cream, film, foam, jelly, or suppository with condoms can lower the risk of pregnancy even more. Nonoxynol-9 (N-9) is the active ingredient in most spermicides made in the United States. Using it many times a day may irritate the tissue in the vagina or anus. This can increase the risk of getting HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

**Emergency Contraception:**

Emergency contraception is a way to reduce the chance of pregnancy if no method of birth control was used or if a method of birth control was used incorrectly or failed. The most widely used emergency contraception in the United States is called Plan B®. Plan B® contains the hormone levonorgestrel, a progestin used in some birth control pills. Plan B® should be taken as soon as possible after unprotected intercourse but can be taken up to 120 hours (5 days) after intercourse. Plan B® can reduce the risk of pregnancy after unprotected intercourse by 89%. Plan B® is safe. It will not work if a female is already pregnant (that is, Plan B® does not cause an abortion), nor will Plan B® harm a pregnancy if taken by a female who did not realize she was already pregnant.

**CONDOMS AND FUTURE PREGNANCY**

If you discontinue using condoms and are not planning a pregnancy begin using another method of birth control. If you are planning a pregnancy, begin taking 400mcg of Folic Acid. Folic Acid is important in preventing certain birth defects in babies.