



**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
**Family Planning Program**

**INFORMATION FOR  
DIAPHRAGM**

The diaphragm is a dome-shaped rubber cup that has a flexible rim. It can be 70-88% effective when used correctly every time.

**BENEFITS:**

- \* Possible reduced risk of cervical dysplasia or cancer.
- \* Protection against some sexually transmitted diseases and pelvic inflammatory disease.

**RISKS/SIDE EFFECTS:** You may experience the following while using the diaphragm with spermicide:

- \* Allergic reaction to rubber in the diaphragm or chemicals in the spermicide.
- \* Foul smelling discharge from prolonged use.
- \* Recurrent cystitis (bladder infection).
- \* Toxic Shock Syndrome Such as: fever [101 degrees or higher], diarrhea, vomiting, muscle aches, rash [like sunburn].

**ALTERNATIVES:** You have received written information on the other methods of birth control that are available. For situations of suspected contraceptive failure, emergency contraception is available and offers a second chance to avoid unintended pregnancy.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** You have received written information about the diaphragm and how to use it.

**DECISION TO STOP USING:** You may stop using the diaphragm at any time. A woman is most likely to get pregnant if she or her partner does not use a method of birth control.

**QUESTIONS:** You may ask questions about the diaphragm at any time and may contact the clinic with further questions.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR DIAPHRAGM USERS

1. Use the diaphragm with contraceptive jelly or cream every time you have intercourse, even during your period. Do not try to guess at your/or your partners fertile times.
2. Plan to insert your diaphragm in plenty of time before intercourse. You can put it in just before intercourse or anytime up to six hours beforehand. Any time is better than not at all.
3. To apply contraceptive jelly or cream: Hold the diaphragm down (like a cup). Squeeze the contraceptive jelly or cream into the dome (use about one tablespoon). Spread some of the cream or jelly around the rim of the diaphragm with your finger.
4. **TO INSERT THE DIAPHRAGM:** First wash your hands with soap and water. With one hand hold the dome of the diaphragm down (contraceptive jelly or cream in the dome). Then press opposite sides of the rim together so the diaphragm folds. Spread the lips of your vagina with your other hand, and insert the folded diaphragm into your vagina. This can be done standing with one foot propped up (on the edge of the bathtub or toilet), squatting, or on your back. Push the diaphragm downward and back along the wall of your vagina as far as it will go. Then tuck the front rim up along the roof of your vagina behind your pubic bone. Once it is in place properly, you should not be able to feel it, except with your fingers. If it is uncomfortable, or you can feel it, take it out and reinsert it.
5. **TO CHECK THE PLACEMENT OF YOUR DIAPHRAGM:** The back rim of the diaphragm is below and behind the cervix and the front rim is behind the pubic bone when correctly placed. Often it is not possible to feel the back rim. You should check to be sure that you can feel your cervix covered by the soft rubber dome of the diaphragm.
6. Avoid use of oil based lubricants such as mineral oil, baby oil, vegetable oil or Vaseline with your diaphragm. Some vaginal medications may be harmful to the diaphragm. Check with you clinician before using any vaginal medication with your diaphragm. Use more contraceptive jelly if you need more lubrication.
7. After intercourse, leave the diaphragm in place for at least six hours. Remove it whenever it is convenient for you after that. Use an additional application of contraceptive jelly or cream if you have intercourse more than once. Do not leave the diaphragm in place for more than 24 hours.
8. **TO REMOVE THE DIAPHRAGM:** First wash your hands with soap and water. Place your index finger behind the front rim of the diaphragm and pull down then out. Be careful not to puncture the diaphragm with a fingernail.
9. **CARE OF THE DIAPHRAGM:**
  - a. Wash the diaphragm with mild soap and water, rinse it and dry it with a towel.
  - b. Store the diaphragm in the plastic container. You may sprinkle it with cornstarch. Do **not** use talcum powder or perfumed powder, they may damage the diaphragm.
  - c. Check your diaphragm for holes or tears each time you use it. Hold it up to the light and stretch the dome slightly with your fingers to see any defects in the rubber.
10. Your diaphragm should not interfere with normal activities. Urination or a bowel movement should not affect its position, but you can check its placement afterwards, if you wish. It is fine to bathe or shower with the diaphragm in place.