



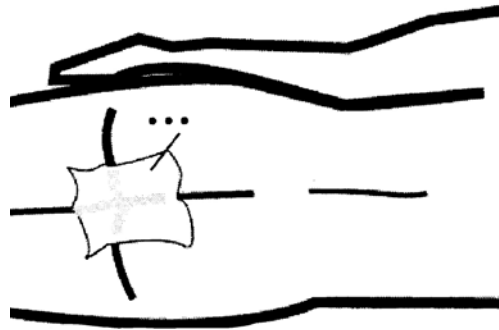
## Using Latex Squares (Dental Dams) for Safer Oral Sex

Latex barriers called Sheer Dams® are available in the Health Resource Center at McKinley Health Center. Sheer Dams® are a 10 x 6 inch silky thin sheet of natural latex. Sheer Dams® are the only latex barrier or “dam” cleared by the U.S. FDA for safer oral sex.

Studies have shown that when Sheer Dams® are used correctly during oral-vaginal or oral-anal sex, they help reduce the risk of catching or spreading sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) such as herpes, gonorrhea, genital warts, syphilis, HIV or parasites. However, they do not completely eliminate the risk. **Abstinence is the only sure form of prevention.**



Barrier placement for oral/vaginal sex



Barrier placement for oral/anal sex (rimming)

### Additional Information

- Oral sex involves skin-to-skin contact: using your mouth to lick or suck (“going down” or “giving head”) on your partner’s labia, vagina, penis or anus (“rimming”).
- The safest way to have oral sex is to keep your partner’s skin and body fluids (vaginal secretions, saliva, blood, semen [cum], urine, feces) away from your mouth by using a barrier (dam) that is of an adequate size to cover the intended area. Condoms can be used as a barrier when someone is performing oral/penile sex.
- Viruses and bacteria enter your body through the mucous membranes of the mouth, vagina, eyes and nose. Bacteria normally found in the rectum or anus can cause vaginal infections when introduced into the vagina.
- Sexually transmitted diseases can be present without any symptoms. Anyone who has ever had oral, vaginal or rectal sexual contact may have unknowingly been exposed to STD’s.
- Fever blisters and cold sores in or around the mouth are caused by the herpes virus and can be transmitted to the genital tissue during oral sexual contact even when no symptoms are present. Many people do not know that they carry this virus in their system. **Abstinence is recommended when a person has active blisters or sores in or around the mouth.**

### Resources

McKinley Health Center, Sexual Health Education Coordinator at 217-333-2714

CDC National STD/AIDS Hotline at 1-800-342-2437

National HIV y Sida en Espanol at 1-800-344-7432

Sheer Glyde Dams web site: <http://www.sheerglydedams.com/index.html>

If you are a registered University of Illinois student and you have questions or concerns, or need to make an appointment, please call: **Dial-A-Nurse at 333-2700**

If you are concerned about any difference in your treatment plan and the information in this handout, you are advised to contact your health care provider.

Visit the McKinley Health Center Web site at: <http://www.mckinley.illinois.edu>