

# Dams

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A dam is a thin latex square held over the vaginal or anal area during oral sex. When used correctly, dams act as a barrier to help reduce the risk of contracting or passing on sexually transmissible infections (STIs), as they stop body fluids like semen, blood and vaginal fluids from being exchanged. Some STIs like genital warts and herpes are hard to avoid during sexual activity as they can be passed through skin to skin genital contact. Using dams decreases the risk of catching the viruses that lead to herpes and genital warts.

## Guidelines for using dams

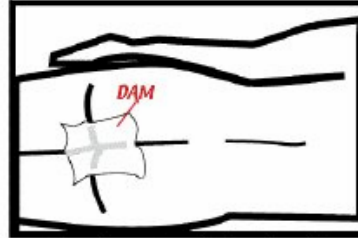
- Don't share dams or use them more than once.
- Use only one side of the dam.
- Always use a new dam if switching between oral-vaginal and oral-anal sex.
- A water-based lubricant (like Wet Stuff or KY) on the underside of the dam can increase sensitivity.
- Store dams in a dry cool place away from direct sunlight - heat can cause the latex in dams to deteriorate, making them more likely to break.

## Instructions for use

- Remove the dam from its plastic packaging and lay it flat, covering the entire vaginal or anal area.
- Hold the edges of the dam but be careful not to stretch it.
- Dispose of dams thoughtfully - do not flush them.



Dam placement for oral/vaginal sex



Dam placement for oral/anal sex (rimming)

pictures courtesy of Sheer Glyde Dams

Dams come in a variety of colours and flavours and are available at FPWA and selected chemists. Using Gladwrap is not a safe alternative to dams, but a condom split along one side and laid flat can be used as a dam. For more information about dams, or to download a brochure, visit [www.kiaorapacific.com.au](http://www.kiaorapacific.com.au)

Unprotected sex can put you at risk of HIV and other STIs. If you've had unprotected sex in the past, get tested by a doctor or at FPWA.

**Practising safe sex reduces the risk of contracting HIV and other sexually transmissible infections (STIs).**



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