

National Condom Day

The Health Column

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2017

National Condom Day is an annual health initiative that coincides with 14 February (Valentine's Day). This is an ideal opportunity to promote healthy relationships, and remind people about the risks of sexually transmissible infections (e.g. genital herpes, and HIV/AIDS), and unplanned pregnancies.

Results from the *National Survey of Australian Secondary Students and Sexual Health (2013)* indicated that:

- amongst sexually active students, the most commonly used form of contraception was the condom (58%), with the majority (63%) of students believing that 'most' or 'all' of their peers use a condom when they have sex
- the majority (67%) of sexually active students reported that a condom was available the last time they had sex, and 86% of these students reported using it
- when referring to their last sexual encounter, 23% of sexually active students reported having sex in a less controlled space (i.e. friend's house, car or outdoors), where a condom may not have been readily available.



These results suggest that people are more likely to use condoms if they are available during a sexual encounter; but there are still many occasions where people are engaging in sexual risk taking behaviour.

National Condom Day is a timely reminder for people to always use condoms during sexual activity to protect themselves and their partner(s). This year's 'summer essentials' theme focuses on condoms, confidence and consent, and aims to empower people to make safe and healthy decisions around their sexual health, and feel more assertive in raising the topic of condoms and safe sex with a partner.

Get involved! Here's how you can be part of **National Condom Day**:

- Order free resources from Sexual Health Quarters (based in Western Australia), including condom packs, posters, frisbees and postcards.

- Be part of the #CondomDay2017 social media campaign (more details available at <http://shq.org.au/national-condom-day-2017/>).
- Follow @sexualhealthquarters on Instagram and/or like familyplanningwa on Facebook.
- Check out the Sexual Health Quarters website (<http://shq.org.au/>) for media releases and ideas for event activities.
- Visit <http://shq.org.au/national-condom-day-2017/> for everything you need to make your National Condom Day a success, including downloadable posters, bunting kits, a social media toolkit and other resources.

Your local pharmacy is your health destination. Pharmacists and pharmacy staff can advise on condom selection. The aim of **National Condom Day** 2017 is to help people feel more assertive when it comes to making decisions about sex, and in raising the topic of condoms and safe sex with a partner.

In addition, you can get more information on safe sex from pharmacies around Australia providing the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's Self Care health information. Self Care Fact Cards available from these pharmacies include topics such as *Genital herpes* and *HIV/AIDS* as well as lifestyle topics such as *Contraception*.

For the nearest Self Care pharmacy location phone the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia on 1300 369 772, or go to www.psa.org.au/selfcare, then click 'Find a *Self Care pharmacy* near you'.