

How to Obtain Condoms from VHA

Information for VA Providers

Condoms are an effective and low-cost public health tool that can reduce the risk of pregnancy, STI, HIV, and sexual transmission of the Zika virus. While condoms do not provide 100 percent protection against STIs, HIV, and Zika acquisition, when used consistently and correctly they are an effective form of protection for individuals engaging in sexual activity.

What You Need to Know About Ordering Condoms

VA Pharmacy

- ▶ VA pharmacies must account for every purchased item. Every item leaving the pharmacy must be:
 - Issued to a ward/clinic as an unlabeled ward stock item, or
 - Delivered to a ward/clinic with patient-specific labeling, or
 - Dispensed as a patient-specific outpatient prescription
- ▶ Condoms are listed in the VA National Formulary as medical/surgical supply items, but they must be marked as supply items (ie., as drugs) in the local drug file so that a co-payment invoice is not generated.
- ▶ Condoms are listed on the VA National Formulary with no restrictions; therefore, subjecting them to a “special drug request” does not conform with VA National Formulary policy.

VA Supply Chain Management

- ▶ Condoms can be purchased by working with the VAMC Supply Chain Management (Logistics) Expendable Item Team for in-person distribution. VA policy does not restrict clinics from purchasing condoms through the VAMC Supply Chain Management Office if they are distributed to the patient from a clinician at an in-person appointment.

- ▶ Work with Supply Chain Management (Logistics) to purchase and stock condoms in storage closets located in the respective clinics for outreach campaigns such as HIV Testing Day, World AIDS Day, and VA Stand Down outreach activities. (Supply Chain Management does not stock fishbowls or other condom dispensing mechanisms)

Recommendations

- ▶ Have a discussion with patients about their possible risks of STIs, HIV, and Zika.
- ▶ Ask patients whether they need condoms and discuss the importance of using condoms to reduce the risk of STI and HIV infections.
- ▶ Continue to provide condoms via prescription. This approach allows for refills. Usually, there is a cap of 12 condoms per prescription. However, a provider can override the cap and prescribe more than 12 condoms.
- ▶ Work with pharmacy staff to ensure that condoms are listed as supply items on the local formulary.
- ▶ Work with supply chain management (Logistics) to purchase condoms for outreach campaigns such as HIV Testing Day, World AIDS Day, VA Stand Downs, and Zika outreach activities in endemic areas.

How to Purchase Condoms in the Clinic

- ▶ Follow VA and facility policies on purchasing and use of purchase cards.
- ▶ The clinic administrative supervisor or purchase card coordinator can direct you to a purchase card holder in your clinic.
- ▶ If you do not have a purchase card holder in your clinic (e.g., at a smaller facility), go through the purchasing/contract office.



**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health
Administration

References

- ▶ *VHA Directive 1120: Responsibilities of the National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP)* (www.va.gov/vhapublications)
- ▶ *Condoms and STDs: Fact Sheet for Public Health Personnel* (www.cdc.gov/condomeffectiveness/docs/Condoms_and_STDS.pdf)
- ▶ *Sexual Transmission and Prevention of Zika Virus* (www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/sexual-transmission-prevention.html)

For additional information, please contact

VHAHHRC@va.gov