

Dental Dams: What are they?

In my research of condoms and condom histories and sexually transmitted diseases, I kept coming upon the phrase “dental dams.” I would gloss over the phrase and keep on reading, until finally I leaned over to my co-worker (also known as my human version of Google) and asked him, “What in the world is a dental dam?” He simply stared at me, started laughing and then turned back to his computer. I was on a mission to find out, even if it meant I got caught by the IT department Googling the phrase at work.

If you were a dentist, a dental dam would be a thin rectangular latex sheet used to help isolate a tooth or set of teeth to be worked on (i.e. for a filling). More than likely though, if you are reading this article on this site, you are not interested in the actual dental version of the dental dam, now are you?

A dental dam that would not be used in dentistry is also a square piece of thin latex that would be used to perform oral sex on a woman. These dams are used to help prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases by providing protection during oral sex and protecting the user's mouth from potentially contain harmful bacteria or viruses. If used properly, dental dams can safeguard the user from contracting HIV and genital herpes or warts.

To use a dental dam, you will simply place the dam over whatever part of your partner's body you are preparing to give oral sex to. Be sure to keep only one side touching your partner. Turning the square around in the middle of administering oral sex would completely defeat the purpose. Like condoms, if necessary, you can apply a drop or two of lubrication. Stick with water-based lubricants as oil-based lubricants like Vaseline tend to weaken the latex and cause breakage. Also like condoms, dental dams are designed to be used only once.

I myself have never seen a dental dam for sale, nor would I know where to buy one, so if you are in the same predicament, do not fret. It is actually quite easy to make your own dental dam. If you have a condom available, cut the tip of the condom off with scissors and then cut down the side of the condom. This will create your square piece of latex. If you do not have a condom available but do have some saran wrap in your pantry, you can simply cut a square piece from the saran wrap to use. Be sure to only use the non-microwavable kind of saran wrap since the microwavable kind has larger pores that allow easier transmission of bacteria.

It should be noted that many STD's and HIV can spread through oral sex, so it is essential to practice safe sex during oral sex with a partner with whom you do not know their sexual history. Having this knowledge about dental dams and how to not only use but also create them, is important for anyone who wants to practice safe sex.

For more information visit: [Dental Dams: What are they?](#)

About the Author

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