

﴿أَثْ صَالِمُ الْمُؤْدِّ Department of Health Munaqhiliqiyitkut Ministère de la Santé

Condom Procurement, Transport and Storage Guidelines

It is known that condoms, when exposed to extreme temperatures, can become compromised. Condoms exposed to temperatures of -70°C (-94°F) transition from a rubber-like material to a glass-like material. Exposure to extreme cold temperatures (-20°C to -50°C or -4°F to -58°F) prepare condoms to transition to a glass-like material and could be more prone to cracking or breaking without careful shipping and handling.

Condom manufacturers recommend that condoms are transported and stored in a cool, dry place below 37 °C or 100°F. It is not likely that short periods at high temperatures or near freezing will compensate the integrity of the condoms. If the condoms are exposed to near freezing temperatures and allowed to return to room temperature prior to use, their integrity should not be compromised. The silicone lubricant on condoms should not freeze at 0°C or 32°F.

Considering Nunavut's arctic climate and frequent extreme weather patterns during the winter months (November-April) it is recommended for condoms to be shipped under the following conditions:

- 1) The bulk of condom procurement should occur in the spring, summer, and if necessary in the fall months.
- 2) Shipments should be large enough to ensure communities will have sufficient supply to last throughout the winter rather than storage at regional warehouses and distributed to communities on an 'as needed' basis.
- 3) In a situation where a community has limited condom stock available, it is advised that condoms be placed in an insulated container or box, with labels indicating "DO NOT FREEZE" for transport with a temperature range control indicator which indicates if condoms reach temperatures below -20 °C (-4°F).
- 4) It is recommended that condoms exposed to temperatures below -20°C (-4°F) should not be distributed and should be disposed.



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Communities will be provided with information through local Community Health Representatives to remind residents about safe storage of condoms and to be cautious of condoms exposed to extreme cold temperatures in the winter months. Included in this information will be the manufacturer's instructions provided with the condoms which states; "if the latex material is sticky, brittle or obviously damaged, do not use the condom", and/or "if the color of the latex is uneven or changed, do not use the condom," and/or "if the condoms appear changed or defective in any way, please do not use them". It is also recommended condoms be transported on the person (in pants pockets, etc.), rather than storing in a vehicle, purse, jacket pocket, etc., where they can be exposed to extreme cold temperatures.

Dr. Geraldine Osborne

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Sources: Lifestyle Condoms; One Condom Manufactures