

SAGINAW COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
PERSONAL AND PREVENTIVE HEALTH  
FAMILY PLANNING

**VAGINAL CONTRACEPTIVE FILM/FOAM (VFC) FACT SHEET**

Vaginal Contraceptive Film/Foam (VFC) is a clear spermicidal film or foam that provides protection against pregnancy. It contains nonoxynol-9, an ingredient that kills sperm. VFC can be used alone or with a diaphragm or condom.

**EFFECTIVENESS:**

- 78% for all concentrations of spermicide when used consistently and correctly.
- Increased effectiveness when used with other birth control methods, such as a condom.

**USE:**

- The film is folded and inserted with your finger deep into the vagina so it is close to the cervix (the opening of the uterus which can be felt at the top of the vagina).
- One square of film should be inserted 15 minutes before intercourse.
- The foam is inserted with a plastic applicator into the vagina where it is pushed out of the applicator to cover the cervix.
- One applicator of foam should be inserted no more than one hour before intercourse.
- Use another application before each act of intercourse.
- Leave spermicide in place for at least 6 hours after intercourse. Douching is not recommended, but if you choose to douche you must wait at least 6 hours.

\*Correct use is vital for protection against pregnancy.

**BENEFITS:**

- You will not feel the VFC.
- It melts quickly and is not messy.
- You will not experience the side effects of taking hormones.
- Provides lubrication during intercourse.
- Can be purchased over the counter and do not require a prescription.

**DISCONTINUATION:**

- If intercourse occurs more than two hours after insertion of spermicide, emergency contraception is available at the Family Planning Clinic and should be taken within 120 hours in order to prevent pregnancy.

**SIDE EFFECTS:**

- Irritation to skin of the vulva, vagina, or penis.

**WARNING SIGNS:**

- There are no warning signs with this method.

**RISKS AND COMPLICATIONS:**

- Allergic reaction.
- HIV exposure is possible.
- Increased risk of bacterial vaginosis.
- Increased risk of yeast when used with the diaphragm or sponge.

### **Nonoxynol-9**

Until recently, it was hoped that the spermicide Nonoxynol-9 (N-9) would reduce the risk of STIs, including HIV. But recent studies have shown that N-9 offers no protection against STIs. In fact, using N-9 many times in a day may even increase the risk of infection.

Products containing N-9 should not be used:

- For anal intercourse.
- By women at risk for HIV.
- Many times a day.
- To prevent STIs.
- By women and men who have allergies to spermicides.

Otherwise, products containing N-9 may increase a condom's contraceptive effectiveness.

**Remember, VFC does not protect against all sexually transmitted diseases so it is important to use a condom each time you have sex.**

Visit our website: [www.saginawpublichealth.org](http://www.saginawpublichealth.org)



SCDPH FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM RECEIVED TITLE X FEDERAL GRANT SUPPORT.

Reference: Hatcher, R.A., et al, (2007) Contraceptive Technology (19<sup>th</sup> Edition)  
New York, NY: Irvington Publishers, Inc.