

## Important Points to Remember

- If you are unsure about how to use Today Vaginal Contraceptive Sponge, contact a doctor, health professional, or family planning clinic for help.
- To avoid introducing germs into your vagina, always wash your hands before handling Today® Sponge and before inserting your fingers into your vagina.
- Wetting Today® Sponge with clean water is important. This is what activates the spermicide. You will notice light foam or “suds”. Do not try to rinse this out.
- You may insert Today Vaginal Contraceptive Sponge any time up to 24 hours before beginning intercourse. After inserting the sponge, you may have intercourse right away.
- Today® Sponge contains enough spermicide for repeated acts of intercourse during a 24-hour period.
- It is not necessary to use the sponge for a full 24 hours, as long as it is left in place 6 hours after the last act of intercourse.
- If you have intercourse when sponge has been in place for 24 hours, leave it in place an additional 6 hours after intercourse before removing it. Today® Sponge must not be left in place for more than 30 hours.
- If you have trouble removing the sponge or if you remove only part of the sponge call the Mayer Labs Product Support Line at **1-877-494-2525** or contact a health professional right away.

## How to insert Today Vaginal Contraceptive Sponge

### A. Insertion Procedure

The sponge may be inserted any time up to 24 hours before intercourse.

1. Remove the sponge from the airtight plastic pouch and hold it in one hand with the “dimple” side up. The loop should dangle under the sponge.
2. Wet the sponge thoroughly with clean tap water. The water activates the spermicide.



3. Squeeze the sponge gently several times until it becomes very sudsy. Be sure you do not squeeze the sponge dry. (The sponge should remain sudsy for insertion.)



4. Fold the sides of the sponge upward with a finger along each side to support it. The sponge should look long and narrow. Be sure the string loop dangles underneath the sponge from one end of the fold to the other, as shown.



5. Bend your wrist and point the end of the folded sponge toward your vagina. Be sure that you can see the fold when you look down at it and that the string loop dangles below.



6. From a standing position, squat down slightly and spread your legs apart. Use your free hand to spread apart the lips of the vagina. You may also stand with one foot on a stool or chair, sit cross-legged or lie down. The semi-squatting position seems to work best for most women. Slide the sponge into the opening of the vagina as far as your fingers will go. Let the sponge slide through your fingers, deeper into the vagina.



7. Now use one or two fingers to push the sponge gently up into your vagina as far as it will go. *Be careful not to push a fingernail through the sponge.* Check the position of the sponge by sliding your finger around the edge of the sponge to make sure your cervix is not exposed. You should be able to feel the string loop.

### Questions about insertion of Today® Sponge.

#### 1. How do I know Today® Sponge is in the proper position?

If you follow the instructions in this booklet, Today® Sponge should be positioned correctly in the upper vagina. To check its position, simply slide your finger around the edge of the sponge. If your cervix is not exposed, the sponge is in the proper position. You should be able to feel the string loop. If the sponge is out of position, simply slide it back in place.

#### 2. Can Today® Sponge fall out?

It is unlikely that Today® Sponge will fall out. During a bowel movement or other form of internal straining, it may be pushed down to the opening of

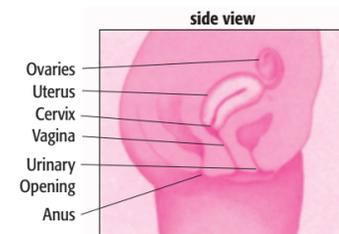
the vagina and perhaps fall out. If you suspect this happening, simply insert your finger into your vagina and push it back. If it should fall into the toilet, moisten a new sponge and insert it immediately. Do not flush the old sponge down the toilet. Discard it in a waste container.

#### 3. How does Today® Sponge stay in place?

Today® Sponge is held in place by the muscles of the upper vagina. In addition, the cup-like indentation on the top of the sponge helps to keep it in position directly over the cervix.

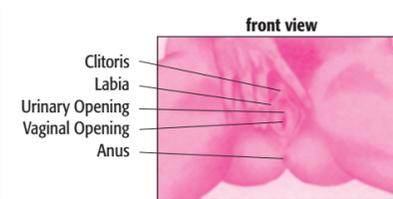
## Some basic information about your reproductive system

### A. To use this method effectively, it is important for you to understand your anatomy.



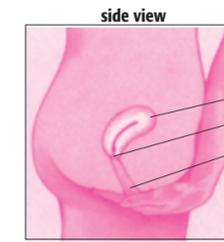
Today Vaginal Contraceptive Sponge is inserted through the vaginal opening and placed in the deepest part of the vagina, just below the cervix. The cervix is at the bottom end of the uterus, and has a small opening through which sperm must travel to reach and fertilize the egg.

### B. How do I find the vaginal opening?



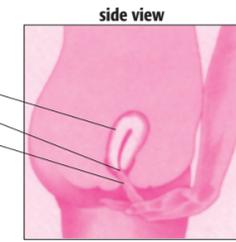
Sit on the edge of a chair with knees apart. Place a good source of light about an arm's length in front of you and use a hand mirror to examine the region between the outer “lips,” or labia. The vaginal opening is between the labia, just below the small urinary opening and one or two inches below the clitoris.

### C. How do I find the cervix?



It is easier to find the cervix if you squat. Insert your finger gently into the vagina, reaching up on an angle toward the back until you find the firm, round surface of the cervix. It feels something like the tip of your nose. In some cases, it may be difficult to locate, so you may have to explore a bit before you find it.

### D. Bearing Down

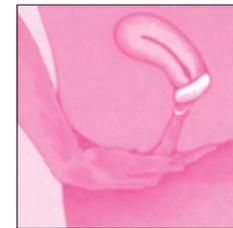


You can bring your cervix down closer to the vaginal opening, and thus make it easier to locate, by bearing down. Take a deep breath and bear down as if you were having a bowel movement. You should now be able to locate your cervix just above the vaginal opening. This technique is also very useful for removing the sponge.

## How to remove Today Vaginal Contraceptive Sponge

### A. Removal Procedure

1. Always wait 6 hours after your last act of intercourse before removing the sponge.



2. Put your finger into your vagina and reach up and back to find the string loop. If you cannot find the loop immediately, bear down until you feel the loop (see “bearing down,” section 8D). Hook your finger around the loop. (If you have not found the loop, grasp the sponge between your thumb and forefinger.)



3. Slowly and gently pull the sponge out. If the vaginal muscles seem to be holding it tightly, wait a few minutes and try again. If removal is still difficult, use the following exercise to relax your vaginal muscles: Tighten vaginal muscles as hard as you can and hold for 10 seconds, then relax and let go. Repeat. As you relax, breathe out slowly while bearing down (see section 8D). Now remove the sponge as you continue to relax.

4. Dispose of the sponge in a waste container. **Do not flush it down the toilet.**

### B. Special Removal Situations

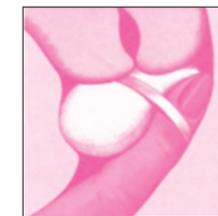
#### 1. Stuck Sponge

There are no structures in the vagina to interfere with removal of the sponge. With tension or unusually strong muscular pressure, the sponge may be held in the vagina more tightly than normal. Simple relaxation of the vaginal muscles and bearing down should make it possible to remove the sponge without difficulty (see section 8D).

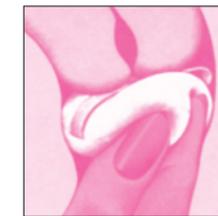
If you are still unable to remove the sponge, it may have adhered by suction to the cervix. To remove, it is necessary to break the suction. To do this, slip a finger between the sponge and the cervix on *one side*, tilting the sponge up and away from the cervix. Once free, the sponge may be removed normally.

If none of the above suggestions seems to help, see your physician or family planning clinic. You may wish to take several unused Today® Sponges along so your medical advisor can help you refine your insertion and removal technique.

#### 2. Upside-down Sponge



Occasionally, a sponge will turn upside down in the vagina, making the string loop more difficult to find. To find the string loop, run your finger around the edge on the back side of the sponge until you feel the string loop where it's attached to the sponge.



If you cannot find the string loop, simply grasp the edge of the sponge between your thumb and forefinger and pull it out slowly. Bearing down (section 8D) will make it easier to reach the sponge.

#### 3. Torn Sponge

Today® Sponge, like a soft contact lens, should be handled gently. Pulling too hard or too quickly on the removal loop may cause the sponge to tear.

The procedure for removing a torn sponge is similar to that for an upside-down sponge. The important thing is to remove the sponge slowly. If you suspect that you have left small pieces of sponge inside the vagina, run a finger around the upper vault of your vagina with a sweeping movement and then toward the vaginal opening to find and remove any remaining sponge material. **To reduce the risk of infection, it is important that you get all parts of sponge out of the vagina. If you have difficulty getting parts of sponge out of the vagina, call the Mayer Labs Product Support Line at 1-877-494-2525 or contact a health professional right away.**

### Questions about removal of Today® Sponge.

#### 1. Is it necessary to douche after removing Today® Sponge?

No, it is not necessary. However, you may douche after using the sponge if you like. But do not douche while the sponge is inside the vagina. And always wait at least 6 hours after intercourse before removing the sponge.

#### 2. Can Today® Sponge get lost in my body?

The opening from the vagina to the uterus is far too small for Today® Sponge to pass through. There is no other normal opening in the vagina that would provide access to any other part of your body.