

British NRI brothers to produce trendy, female-friendly condoms

Two Indian-origin brothers who run a pharmacy in central London are to take on condom makers Durex, whose monopoly has made condoms in Britain among the most expensive in the world, a report said Saturday.

Their plan is to make the condoms available in trendy small packs that they hope will be attractive to women. They will be dispensed not only at chemists but also in nightclubs.

British condoms used to be the most expensive in the world, until the government slashed value added tax on it in 2006. But prices are still the third highest, behind Ireland, whose Catholic priests prohibit contraception, and the Netherlands.

A packet of 12 Durex Elite condoms cost 2.50 pounds in Germany, compared to 8.32 pounds in Britain.

Now brothers Ketan and Shandip Shah have come up with a new condom, called Fusion, that will be aimed at women and far cheaper than Durex condoms, the Times newspaper reported.

Three Fusion condoms will be priced at 1.99 pounds, compared to three Durex condoms that cost 3.50 pounds, the brothers said. The condoms will be stocked by half of all independent chemists in England.

They have also signed a deal with nightclubs to stock the condoms and offer them free to customers. The condoms will come in a thin wallet the size of a book of matches, so that they are not instantly recognisable.

The newspaper said research shows women are not comfortable having condoms in their handbag or purse.

'We want to say this is a trendy but essential item to take on your night out,' said Shandip Shah.

'If we can persuade girls to carry something that doesn't look a pack of condoms in their bags, maybe we can bring down the rates of sexually transmitted diseases in this country, which are truly terrible,' he added.

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