

# *Birth Control*

## Abstinence

## Barrier Methods

Cervical Caps  
Diaphragms  
Female Condoms  
Male Condoms  
Using Condoms  
Condom Questions  
Spermicides

## Hormonal Methods

Birth Control Pills  
Progesterin-Only Pills  
Combined Oral Contraceptive Pills  
Pill Questions & Answers  
Contraceptive Patch  
Contraceptive Ring  
Depo-Provera

## Long-Term Methods

Intrauterine Device (IUD)  
Norplant  
Implanon  
Tubal Ligation  
Vasectomy

## Natural Methods

Natural Family Planning  
Basal Body Temperature/Fertility Awareness Charting  
Ovulation Method  
Standard Days Method  
Rhythm Method  
Withdrawal

## *Abstinence*

Abstinence means not having vaginal, anal or oral intercourse.

## *Barrier Methods*

The idea of the barrier method is very simple: block the sperm's path to the uterus to prevent pregnancy.

Methods include: the male condom, the diaphragm, the cervical cap, the female condom.

## **Hormonal Method**

Oral contraceptives use man-made hormones that act like natural hormones in the body. They prevent the body from releasing mature eggs from the ovaries.

Methods include "the pill", emergency contraception (the morning after pill), Depo-Provera (a shot), Norplant (an implant into the body), the patch, vaginal rings, and some types of Intrauterine Devices.

## *Long-Term Methods*

Long term methods are methods that work for three years or more which include the intrauterine device and Norplant.

## *Permanent Methods*

Permanent methods are methods that the chance of having it reversed is very small and include vasectomy for the male and having the "tubes tied" for a female.

## *Natural Methods*

These are methods that do not require any drugs or chemicals. Most methods work by determining when a woman is fertile and avoiding sexual intercourse at that time. These methods include the Basal Body Temperature, Fertility Awareness Charting, Ovulation Method, Standard Days Method, Rhythm Method and Withdrawal.

# *Abstinence*

Abstinence means not having vaginal, anal or oral intercourse.

## *Effectiveness*

100% in preventing pregnancy and the best protection against Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs).

## *Frequency*

Not applicable.

There's nothing weird or "uptight" with choosing abstinence - it's just like choosing to use a condom or hormonal contraceptive. It's about what you want for you, your body and your life.

## *Benefits*

It is the only method that is 100% effective.

Freedom from guilt and worry.

## *Disadvantages*

Sexual abstinence can be a hard thing to practice. Young people especially may find the drive of hormones and curiosity difficult to overcome.

## *Side Effects*

Peace of mind.

Greater self-esteem.

## *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

Not applicable.

# *Cervical Cap*

## *Effectiveness*

100% in preventing pregnancy and the best protection against Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs).

## *Frequency*

Not applicable.

There's nothing weird or "uptight" with choosing abstinence - it's just like choosing to use a condom or hormonal contraceptive. It's about what you want for you, your body and your life.

## *Benefits*

It is the only method that is 100% effective.

Freedom from guilt and worry.

## *Disadvantages*

## *Side Effects*

Peace of mind.

Greater self-esteem.

## *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

Not applicable.

# *Diaphragms*

## *Effectiveness*

Perfect use: 94% effective. Typical use: 84% effective.

## *Frequency*

Each act of sex

## *Benefits*

No partner involvement.

## *Disadvantages*

## *Side Effects*

Toxic shock syndrome (TSS); urinary tract infections; candidiasis and bacterial vaginosis; latex or natural rubber sensitivity; discomfort or pain if device is not placed correctly or if an incorrect size is used.

## *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

Known hypersensitivity to dry natural rubber and/or prior history of toxic shock syndrome (TSS).

# *Female Condoms*

## *Effectiveness*

Perfect use: 95% effective. Typical use: 79% effective.

## *Frequency*

Each act of sex

## *Benefits*

Protects against sexually transmitted infections. Available without prescription.

## *Disadvantages*

## *Side Effects*

None

## *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

Use a female condom and male condom at the same time, if you do, both products will not stay in place.

# *Male Condoms*

## *Effectiveness*

Perfect use: 98% effective. Typical use: 85% effective.

## *Frequency*

Each act of sex

## *Benefits*

Protects against sexually transmitted infections. Available without prescription.

## *Disadvantages*

## *Side Effects*

None listed

## *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

You are allergic to natural rubber latex or spermicide, or lubricants; if condom has come into contact with oil in any form (petroleum jelly, baby oil, mineral oil, vegetable oil) - oil rots rubbers. Avoid contact with talcum/baby powder because it may contain oil; you or your partner are using vaginal products for medical treatment purposes, the condoms may be weakened.

# *Using Condoms*

*Effectiveness*

*Frequency*

*Benefits*

*Disadvantages*

*Side Effects*

*You Should Not Use This Method If:*

# *Condom Questions*

*Effectiveness*

*Frequency*

*Benefits*

*Disadvantages*

*Side Effects*

*You Should Not Use This Method If:*

# *Spermicides*

*Effectiveness*

*Frequency*

*Benefits*

*Disadvantages*

*Side Effects*

*You Should Not Use This Method If:*

## *Progestin – Only Pills*

### *Effectiveness*

Perfect use: 99% effective. Typical use: 92% effective.

### *Frequency*

Daily

### *Benefits*

Rapidly reversible. No partner involvement.

### *Disadvantages*

### *Side Effects*

Serious risks include: ectopic pregnancy; ovarian cysts; cancer of the reproductive organs and breasts; liver tumors.

Other side effects include: irregular bleeding (change in menstrual bleeding, periods, may be early or late, spotting between periods); headache, tender breasts; nausea and dizziness; weight gain, acne and extra hair on your face and body.

### *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

There is any chance you may be pregnant; if you have breast cancer; if you have bleeding between your periods which has not been diagnosed; if you are taking certain drugs for epilepsy (seizures) or for TB; if you are hypersensitive or allergic to any component of the product; if you have liver tumors, either benign or cancerous; if you have acute liver disease.

# *Combined Oral Contraceptive Pills*

## *Effectiveness*

Perfect use: 99% effective. Typical use: 92% effective.

## *Frequency*

Daily

## *Benefits*

Rapidly reversible; daily dosing; no partner involvement.

## *Disadvantages*

## *Side Effects*

Serious risks include: developing blood clots; heart attacks and strokes; gallbladder disease; liver tumors;; cancer of the reproductiv eorgans and breasts.

Other side effects include: vaginal bleeding (irregular vaginal bleeding or spotting); problems wearing contact lenses; fluid retention; melasma (spotty darkening of the skin, particularly of the face); nausea and vomiting; change in appetite, headache, nervousness, depression, dizziness; loss of scalp hair; rash; vaginal infections.

## *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

You smoke cigarettes, especially if you are over the age of 35; if you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant; a history of heart attack or stroke; blood clots in the legs (thrombophlebitis), lungs (pulmonary embolism), or eyes; chest pain (angina petoris); known or suspected breast cancer or cancer of the lining of the uterus, cervix or vagina; unexplained vaginal bleeding (until your doctor reaches a diagnosis); hepatitis or yellowing of the whites of your eyes or of the skin (jaundice) during pregnancy or during previous use of hormonal contraceptives; liver tumor (benign or cancerous); severe high blood pressure; dabetes with complications of the kidneys, eyes, nerves, or blood vessels; headaches with neurological symptoms; use of oral contraceptives (birth control pills); disease of heart valves with cimplications; need for a prolonged period of bed rest following major surgery; an allergic reaction to any of the components of the combined oral contraceptive pill.

# *Pill Questions and Answers*

*Effectiveness*

*Frequency*

*Benefits*

*Disadvantages*

*Side Effects*

*You Should Not Use This Method If:*

# Contraceptive Patch

## Effectiveness

Perfect use: 99% effective. Typical use: 92% effective

## Frequency

Weekly

## Benefits

Rapidly reversible; once-a-week dosing; no partner involvement.

## Disadvantages

The patch peels off in about 2% of cases, especially if women place it where they have used fatty soaps, lotions or oils under or over the patch; if you weigh more than 194 pounds, the patch may be slightly less effective.

## Side Effects

Serious risks include: developing blood clots; heart attack and strokes; gallbladder disease;; liver tumors; cancer of the reproductive organs and breasts.

Other side effects include: skin irritation; vaginal bleeding (irregular vaginal bleeding or spotting); problems wearing contact lenses; fluid retention or raised blood pressure; melasma (spotting darkening of the skin, particularly of the face); nausea, vomiting, breast symptoms, headache, menstrual cramps and abdominal pain; change in appetite, nervousness, depression, dizziness, loss of scalp hair, rash, vaginal infections.

## You Should Not Use This Method If:

You smoke cigarettes, especially if you are over the age of 35; if you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant; a history of heart attack or stroke; blood clots in the legs (thrombophlebitis), lungs (pulmonary embolism), or eyes; chest pain (angina pectoris); known or suspected breast cancer or cancer of the lining of the uterus, cervix or vagina; unexplained vaginal bleeding (until your doctor reaches a diagnosis); hepatitis or yellowing of the whites of your eyes or of the skin (jaundice) during pregnancy or during previous use of hormonal contraceptives; liver tumor (benign or cancerous); severe high blood pressure; diabetes with complications of the kidneys, eyes, nerves, or blood vessels; headaches with neurological symptoms; use of oral contraceptives (birth control pills); disease of heart valves with complications; need for a prolonged period of bed rest following major surgery; an allergic reaction to any of the components of the contraceptive patch.

# *Contraceptive Ring*

## *Effectiveness*

Perfect use: 99% effective. Typical use: 92% effective

## *Frequency*

Monthly

## *Benefits*

Rapidly reversible; once a month dosing; no partner involvement.

## *Disadvantages*

## *Side Effects*

Serious risks include: developing blood clots; heart attack and strokes; gallbladder disease;; liver tumors; cancer of the reproductive organs and breasts.

Other side effects include: vaginal infection and irritation; vaginal discharge; headache; weight gain; Nausea; vomiting; change in appetite; abdominal cramps and bloating; breast tenderness or enlargement; irregular vaginal bleeding or spotting; changes in menstrual cycle; temporary infertility after treatment; fluid retention; spotty darkening of the skin, particularly on the face; rash; weight changes; depression; intolerance to contact lenses.

## *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

You smoke cigarettes, especially if you are over the age of 35; if you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant; a history of heart attack or stroke; blood clots in the legs (thrombophlebitis), lungs (pulmonary embolism), or eyes; chest pain (angina pectoris); known or suspected breast cancer or cancer of the lining of the uterus, cervix or vagina; unexplained vaginal bleeding (until your doctor reaches a diagnosis); hepatitis or yellowing of the whites of your eyes or of your skin (jaundice) during pregnancy or during previous use of hormonal contraceptives; liver tumor (benign or cancerous); severe high blood pressure; diabetes with complications of the kidneys, eyes, nerves, or blood vessels; headaches with neurological symptoms; use of oral contraceptives (birth control pills); disease of heart valves with complications; need for a prolonged period of bed rest following major surgery; an allergic reaction to any of the components of the vaginal ring.

# *Depo-Provera*

## *Effectiveness*

Three in 1,000 women will become accidentally pregnant in the first year of use.

## *Frequency*

Injection once every three months.

## *Benefits*

“Hands-free” method-no daily dose and nothing needs to be used during sex to prevent pregnancy; Helps decrease menstrual blood loss and anemia as well as cramps and premenstrual syndrome; Very private; Can be used by breast-feeding women; May improve symptoms caused by a condition called endometriosis.

## *Disadvantage*

You must return to your health care provider every 3 months for the next injection; If you do not like the side effects from the injection, you will have to wait until it wears off in 3 months/ It may take up to 10 months for normal fertility to return; It does not provide protection from STIs.

## *Side Effects*

Serious risks include: losing calcium from your bones; cancer; unexpected pregnancy; allergic reactions, increased risk of blood clots; ectopic pregnancy

Other side effects include: weight gain; irregular menstrual bleeding; amenorrhea; headache; nervousness; abdominal cramps; dizziness; weakness or fatigue; decreased sexual desire; leg cramps; nausea; vaginal discharge or irritation; breast swelling and tenderness; bloating; swelling of the hands or feet; backache; depression; insomnia; acne; pelvic pain; no hair growth or excessive hair loss; rash; hot flashes; joint pain; loss of bone mineral density.

## *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

You think you may be pregnant; if you have any vaginal bleeding without a known reason; if you have had cancer of the breast; if you have had a stroke; if you have or have had blood clots (phlebitis) in your legs; if you have problems with your liver or liver disease; if you are allergic to injectable contraceptive (medroxyprogesterone acetate or any of its other ingredients).

## *Intrauterine Device IUD (Copper-T)*

### *Effectiveness*

Perfect use: 99% effective; Typical use: 99% effective.

### *Frequency*

10 Years

### *Benefits*

Cost-effective for long term use, no parter

### *Disadvantage*

### *Side Effects*

Pain, usually uterine cramps or low bakcache, occurs at the time of insertion and may persist; fainting may occur at the time of insertion or reoval; some bleeding occurs following insertion in most women; partial or total perforation through the wall of the uterus may occur at the time of, or after insertion; bleeding between menstrual periods may occur during the first 2 or 3 months after insertion; occasionally, you may miss a menstrual period; the device may come out of your uterus through the cervical opening and is most likely to occur during the first 2 or 3 menstrual cycles following insertion.

### *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

You think you may be pregnant; abnormalities of the usterus resulting in distortion of the uterine cavity; acute pelvic inflammatory disease or a history of pelvic inflammatory disease; postpartum endometriosis or infected abortion in the past three months; known or suspected uterine or cervical malignancy, including unresolved, abnormal Pap smear; genital bleeding or unknown etiology, untreated acute cervicitis or vaginitis, including bacterial vaginosis, until infection is controlled; Wilson's disease; known allergy to copper; patient or her partner has multiple sexual partner; conditions associated with increased susceptibility to infections with microorganisms (such conditions include, but are not limited to, leukemia, acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), and (I.V. drug abuse) genital actinomycosis; a previosuly inserted IUD that has not been removed.

# *Norplant*

*Effectiveness*

*Frequency*

*Benefits*

*Disadvantage*

*Side Effects*

*You Should Not Use This Method If:*

# *Implanon*

*Effectiveness*

*Frequency*

*Benefits*

*Disadvantage*

*Side Effects*

*You Should Not Use This Method If:*

# *Tubal Ligation*

*Effectiveness*

*Frequency*

*Benefits*

*Disadvantage*

*Side Effects*

*You Should Not Use This Method If:*

# *Tubal Ligation*

*Effectiveness*

*Frequency*

*Benefits*

*Disadvantage*

*Side Effects*

*You Should Not Use This Method If:*

# *Vasectomy*

*Effectiveness*

*Frequency*

*Benefits*

*Disadvantage*

*Side Effects*

*You Should Not Use This Method If:*

## *Natural Family Planning Chart*

The idea behind *natural family planning* is very simple. A woman is fertile for only about 100 to 120 hours during a month. By avoiding sexual intimacy during this time, pregnancy can be avoided.

This method uses your body's basal body temperature/BBT (your body's core temperature) to let you know when you are ovulating. Normally, the BBT stays about 97 degrees fahrenheit. When you ovulate, the body's temperature goes up slightly to 97.5 or 98 degrees and stays there for a number of days. A special type of thermometer called a basal metabolic thermometer is used to record the BBT on a special chart. The woman also checks the consistency of her cervical mucus. She may also notice other changes, such as pain in the area of the ovaries, bloating, low backache and breast tenderness.

### *Effectiveness*

This method can be 90% to 98% effective (2 to 10 pregnancies per 100 couples) when they are practiced correctly.

### *Frequency*

Each day must be accounted for.

### *Benefits*

It is the very easy to learn and it does not cost a lot.

### *Disadvantage*

Effectiveness depends upon following the instructions completely and using abstinence or another method of birth control during the fertile period.

### *Side Effects*

Not applicable.

### *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

## *Basal Body Temperature/Fertility Awareness Charting*

This method uses your body's basal body temperature/BBT (your body's core temperature) to let you know when you are ovulating. Normally, the BBT stays about 97 degrees fahrenheit. When you ovulate, the body's temperature goes up slightly to 97.5 or 98 degrees and stays there for a number of days. A special type of thermometer called a basal metabolic thermometer is used to record the BBT on a special chart. The woman also checks the consistency of her cervical mucus. She may also notice other changes, such as pain in the area of the ovaries, bloating, low backache and breast tenderness.

### *Effectiveness*

This method can be 90% to 98% effective (2 to 10 pregnancies per 100 couples) when they are practiced correctly.

### *Frequency*

Each day must be accounted for.

### *Benefits*

It is the very easy to learn and it does not cost a lot.

### *Disadvantage*

It is not necessarily the most reliable method of preventing pregnancy.

### *Side Effects*

Not applicable.

### *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

You have irregular menstrual cycles or who do not have menstrual cycles that are exactly the same number of days every month.

## *Ovulation Method*

The idea behind the *ovulation method* is based on the idea that a lack of cervical mucus means that the egg has not yet been released by the ovaries. Without the mucus, sperm will not be able to survive inside the woman until the time that an egg is released.

There are three ways to check your cervical mucus. You can use your finger or toilet paper to wipe across the opening of the vagina and then take a look at the mucus. Wear a panty liner and examine any cervical mucus that may be left on it (this can be hard to detect), or the best way is simply to reach in and get a sample of your cervical mucus. Examine the consistency of the mucus and try to stretch the mucus between your fingers. If you can stretch it at least three inches without breaking it, then ovulation is about to occur. Sexual intercourse should be avoided from the time you begin to notice the slippery, stretchy mucus until at least two days after it is gone.

### *Effectiveness*

This method can be 80% effective.

### *Frequency*

Each day must be accounted for.

### *Benefits*

It is the very easy to learn and it does not cost a lot.

### *Disadvantage*

By itself, this method is not as reliable as other methods. It requires a woman to be very comfortable with her body since she will need to regularly check her cervical mucus.

### *Side Effects*

Not applicable.

### *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

You have not received training in this technique by a professional.

## *Standard Days Method*

The Standard Days Method (SDM), developed at the Georgetown University School of Medicine is relatively new. All you need to do is keep track of how long your menstrual cycle is to determine when Days 8 through 19 occur. When the first day of your period arrives, this is Day 1. Between Day 1 and Day 7, it is highly unlikely that you will become pregnant. Between Day 8 and Day 19, you are most fertile and should abstain from sexual intercourse or use another form of birth control. Between Day 20 and Day 32 you are once again unlikely to get pregnant. Cycle beads can be used to keep track of the days.

### *Effectiveness*

95%

When used perfectly, only five of every 100 women will get pregnant.

### *Frequency*

Each day must be accounted for.

### *Benefits*

It is the very easy to learn

It is very does not cost a lot.

### *Disadvantages*

Effectiveness depends upon using abstinence or another method of birth control during the fertile period.

### *Side Effects*

Not applicable.

### *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

Your periods are not regular.

Your cycles are shorter than 26 days.

Your cycles are longer than 32 days.

## *Rhythm Method*

The *rhythm method* is based on three ideas. Firstly, the women ovulate 14 days before menstruation begins give or take two days. Secondly, that sperm can survive inside a women for three days. And lastly, that an egg can only be fertilized within 24 hours of being released from the ovaries..

Based on these assumptions, the rhythm method requires a women to count back 14 days from the first day of her period which is presumably the day on which she ovulated and will ovulate the following month. In order to avoid pregnancy, she will need to abstain from sexually intercourse or use another form of birth control around this time.

### *Effectiveness*

This method can be 80% to 87% effective.

### *Frequency*

Each day must be accounted for.

### *Benefits*

It is the very easy to learn and it does not cost a lot.

### *Disadvantage*

Effectiveness depends upon following the instructions completely and using abstinence or another method of birth control during the fertile period.

### *Side Effects*

Not applicable.

### *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

# *Withdrawal*

The idea behind *withdrawal* is very simple. A man “pull-out” of the woman before ejaculation occurs.

## *Effectiveness*

This method can be 79% effective.

## *Frequency*

Each encounter must be accounted for.

## *Benefits*

It is very easy to learn and it does not cost a lot.

## *Disadvantage*

It is not necessarily the most reliable method of preventing pregnancy.

## *Side Effects*

Pregnancy and/or Sexually Transmitted Disease

## *You Should Not Use This Method If:*

Your partner does not have self control.

Oral contraceptives employ synthetic hormones that mimic the properties of natural estrogens and/or **progesterone** to "fool" the female reproductive system. They provide constant levels of an estrogen and/or **progestin** in the blood, thus suppressing the release of both FSH and LH. Suppression of FSH inhibits maturation of an egg in an ovary. Suppression of LH inhibits release of an egg from the ovary. In addition to the inhibition of ovulation, the constant level of an estrogen and **progestin** in the body cause insufficient thickening of the endometrium, which prevents attachment of the egg. **Progestins** also promotes production of thick, opaque mucus, which acts as a barrier to sperm, as sperm can only pass through clear, thin mucus. **Progestin** is also thought to produce changes in the fallopian tubes that impede movement of the egg toward the uterus. Estrogen and **progestin** may also alter the pattern of muscle contractions in the tubes and uterus. This effect may interfere with implantation. In case ovulation does occur, which is rare but can happen, these additional effects also help to prevent pregnancies.