

BIRTH CONTROL OPTIONS

Abstinence

- Abstinence, or refraining from any sexual contact, is the only form of birth control with 100% effectiveness.

Reversible Methods of Birth Control

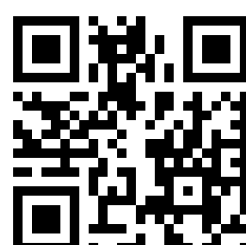
- **Intrauterine Contraception (IUD):** A small, T shaped device is inserted into the uterus by a doctor.
 - **Hormonal IUD** – releases small amounts of progestin to prevent pregnancy. Remains in uterus for up to 3 to 6 years and has a failure rate of 0.1-0.4%
 - **Copper IUD** – the copper in the IUD prevents pregnancy by making the uterus environment not capable of egg implantation. This method lasts up to 10 years and has a failure rate of 0.8%.
- **Injection:** Hormone shots of progestin into the buttocks or arm every three months by a doctor has a 4% failure rate.
- **Oral Contraception:** Hormone pills that must be taken at the same time each day. There are two options, each with a failure rate of about 7%.
 - **Combined oral contraceptives:** contain both estrogen and progestin
 - **Progestin only pill:** contains only progestin and is a good option for those who cannot take the estrogen pill due to a history of smoking, blood clots, or breast cancer.
- **Patch:** A skin patch can be worn on the lower abdomen or buttocks that releases progestin and estrogen. A new patch is applied weekly for three weeks and a patch is not worn the fourth week, allowing the menstrual period. Typical failure rate is 7%.
- **Hormonal vaginal contraceptive ring:** A ring is placed inside your vagina and releases progestin and estrogen. The ring is worn for three weeks and taken out on the fourth week, allowing the menstrual period to occur. Typical failure rate is 7%.

Permanent Methods

- **Tubal ligation:** Women can have their fallopian tubes closed, preventing sperm and eggs from meeting. This procedure can be done in the hospital or an outpatient surgical center. Typical failure rate is 0.5%.
- **Vasectomy:** This operation is done on males to prevent sperm from entering his penis, so the ejaculate never contains sperm. This is an outpatient surgical procedure and can take up to 12 weeks for the male's sperm count to drop to zero.

Sources

- www.mededmaterials.org
- www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/contraception/index.htm



Barrier Methods

- **Diaphragm:** The diaphragm is shaped like a shallow cup and is placed inside the vagina to cover the cervix to block sperm. It is inserted with spermicide before sexual intercourse. Typical failure rate is 17%.
- **Cervical cap:** The same function and process as using a diaphragm, but is thimble shaped.
- **Sponge:** A sponge contains spermicide and is placed in the vagina over the cervix. This method works up to 24 hours and must remain in the vagina 6 hours after intercourse before it is removed. Typical failure rate for women who have never had a baby is 14% and 27% for women who have had a baby before.
- **Male condoms:** Male condoms are worn by the male, preventing sperm from entering the partner's body. Latex condoms are the most common and they help prevent pregnancy, HIV, and other STDs. Typical failure rate is 13%.
- **Female condoms:** Worn by a woman to prevent sperm from getting into her body and may help prevent STDs. It can be inserted up to eight hours before sexual intercourse. Typical failure rate is 21%.
- **Spermicides:** Work by killing sperm and can be purchased in several different forms – foam, gel, cream, film, suppository, or tablet. Must be placed in the vagina within one hour of intercourse. Typical failure rate is 21%.

Fertility Awareness Methods

- Understanding your fertility pattern can help you plan to get pregnant or to avoid getting pregnant. A female's egg is only viable for a short period of time during the menstrual cycle, and this period is known as the ovulatory period and lasts about 9 days. On these fertile days, you can choose to not have sex or use a barrier method.

Emergency Contraception

- Emergency contraception is not a regular method and is only used after sexual intercourse where no birth control was used or if a birth control method failed, including broken condoms.
- Women can take emergency contraceptive pills as long as 5 days after unprotected sex, but the sooner it is taken the more likely it will be effective. There are several different emergency contraceptive pills available within the United States, some of which are available over the counter.