

BIRTH CONTROL OPTIONS

Abstinence

Avoiding all activities that lead to the exchange of body fluids.

Cervical Cap



A thick, thimble-shaped cap that fits over the cervix. It blocks sperm from entering the uterus. Must be used with a spermicide.

Female Condom



Looks like a long deflated balloon. The woman inserts it into her vagina before sex. Protects against pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

Male Condoms



A latex sheath that is rolled over a male's penis before sex. Condoms prevent semen and other secretions from entering the partner's body. Protects against pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

Contraceptive Patch



Looks like a square bandage. Slowly releases hormones through the skin. The hormones prevent ovulation and create a barrier to prevent sperm from entering the uterus. Each patch is worn for seven days before changing to another patch. Can be worn on the back, upper arm, buttocks, or stomach (never on the breasts).

Contraceptive Sponge



A disposable sponge that contains a spermicide. The sponge fits over the cervix and absorbs sperm, preventing it from entering the uterus. The spermicide in the sponge then kills the sperm.

Depo-Provera



A birth control shot containing progestin only (no estrogen). It stops the ovaries from releasing an egg every month, and it thins the lining of the uterus. The shot is given in the buttocks every 12-13 weeks.

Intrauterine Device (IUD)



Hormonal IUD: A T-shaped device that is placed into the uterine cavity. Emits a hormone that causes the uterine lining to thin and the cervix to thicken.

Copper IUD: The copper wire changes the chemistry in the uterus and destroys sperm.

Oral Contraceptives (the Pill)



Birth control pills contain an estrogen and progestin hormone. They protect against pregnancy by preventing the release of an egg from the ovary, and they thin the uterine lining.

Tubal Ligation



A surgical procedure which blocks a woman's tubes that carry an egg from the ovary to the uterus.

Spermicide



A gel, foam, film, or suppository that is placed in the vagina, near the cervix. It kills sperm before it can enter the uterus and fertilize an egg.

Vaginal Ring



A thin, flexible, transparent ring that is inserted into the vagina. It releases progestin and estrogen hormones for three weeks. The hormones prevent ovulation and thicken the cervical mucus.

Vasectomy



A surgical procedure that is performed on a man. A small portion of the tubes that carry sperm from the testicles is cut and sealed. No sperm can get into the semen.

Withdrawal

This is not a form of birth control! The man withdraws his penis from the vagina before ejaculation. This method is risky and results in pregnancy in 1 out of 5 users.

Reference:

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada. Sexuality and u.ca. *Contraceptive Methods*. Retrieved February, 2005 from <http://www.sexualityandu.ca/eng/parents/CN/methods.cfm>

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HOW EFFECTIVE ARE THEY?

method	how well it works	how it works	pros	cons
Abstinence <i>not having sex</i>	100%	Do not have sex.	- Free. - No side effects (physical or emotional).	- None.
Cervical Cap <i>must be used with spermicide</i>	Given birth before: 68 - 74% Never given birth: 84 - 91%	Prevents sperm from entering the cervix.	- Few side effects.	- Must be fitted by a doctor. - Must be used every time. - Spermicide use may increase risk of STI.
Condom <i>Male or Female</i>	Female: 79 - 95% Male: 85 - 98%	Traps sperm.	- Can buy at a drugstore. - Cheap. - No side effects. - Fits everyone. - Male condom is FREE at the Health Unit.	- Male condom must be used correctly and consistently. - May leak or burst. - Spermicide use may increase risk of STI.
Condom and Spermicide <i>Male</i>	98%	Traps and kills sperm.	- Can buy at a drugstore. - Cheap. - No side effects. - Fits everyone.	- Must be used correctly and consistently. - May leak or burst. - Spermicide use may increase risk of STI.
Contraceptive Patch <i>Evra Patch</i>	92 - 99.7%	No egg is released.	- No pill to remember to take. - No injections.	- Need to change patch weekly. - Possible side effects.
Contraceptive Sponge <i>Protectaid Sponge</i>	Given birth before: 68 - 80% Never given birth: 84 - 91.9%	Traps and kills sperm.	- Can buy at a drugstore.	- Must be put in every time. - Must feel comfortable inserting and removing the product.
Depo-Provera	97 - 99.7%	No egg is released.	- No pill to remember to take. - 12 weeks protection with each injection. - No menstrual period.	- Possible side effects. - Weakening of the bones. - Must be given by injection. - May cause weight gain.
Intra Uterine Device <i>IUD</i>	99.2 - 99.4%	Prevents implantation.	- May be left in up to five years.	- Must be inserted by a doctor. - May slip out of place. - Possible side effects (e.g., cramps, heavier periods, spotting).
Oral Contraceptive <i>the Pill</i>	92 - 99.7%	No egg is released.	- Easy to use with little hassle.	- Possible side effects. - Must be taken every day.
Emergency Contraceptive Pill <i>ECP</i>	58 - 95%	Taken up to three days after unprotected sex, prevents implantation.	- Prevents unwanted pregnancy.	- Possible side effects. - Emergency method only.
Progestin only <i>mini-pill</i>	92 - 99.7%	Egg might not develop.	- Prevents unwanted pregnancy. - No estrogen. - Can be used if you are breastfeeding.	- Must be taken every day.
Sterilization <i>surgical procedures (e.g., tubal ligation, vasectomy)</i>	Female: 99.5% Male: 99.9%	Prevents the joining of sperm and egg.	- Considered to be permanent.	- Surgery involved.
Spermicide <i>foam, advantage 24, vaginal contraceptive film</i>	71 - 82%	Kills sperm.	- Can buy at a drugstore.	- Must feel comfortable inserting the product.
Vaginal Ring <i>NuvaRing</i>	92 - 99.79%	No egg is released.	- Change the ring every three weeks.	- If not inserted properly the ring can slip out.
Withdrawal (pulling out) before ejaculation	18%	Penis is removed from vagina before ejaculation.	- Free.	- Risk of pregnancy each time.

Reference:

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada. Sex Sense. Canadian Contraception Guide, 2nd Edition. (2005).