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Contraception

Contraception (birth control) is a type of preventive mechanism against pregnancy by interfering with the normal process of ovulation, fertilization, and implantation. There are different kinds of birth control that act at different points in the process namely;

* [combined pill](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/combined-contraceptive-pill/)
* [condoms (female)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/female-condoms/)
* [condoms (male)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/male-condoms/)
* [contraceptive implant](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/contraceptive-implant/)
* [contraceptive injection](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/contraceptive-injection/)
* [contraceptive patch](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/contraceptive-patch/)
* [diaphragms](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/contraceptive-diaphragm-or-cap/)
* [intrauterine device (IUD)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/iud-coil/)
* [intrauterine system (IUS)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/ius-intrauterine-system/)
* [natural family planning](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/natural-family-planning/)
* [progestogen-only pill](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/the-pill-progestogen-only/)
* [vaginal ring](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/vaginal-ring/)

There are 2 permanent methods of contraception:

* [female sterilisation](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/female-sterilisation/)
* [male sterilisation (vasectomy)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/vasectomy-male-sterilisation/)

They can be grouped into;

* Hormonal methods: These use medications (hormones) to prevent ovulation. Hormonal methods include birth control pills ( **[oral contraceptives](http://www.healthofchildren.com/N-O/Oral-Contraceptives.html)** ), Depo Provera injections, and Norplant.
* Barrier methods: These methods work by preventing the sperm from getting to and fertilizing the egg. Barrier methods include male [**condom**](http://www.healthofchildren.com/C/Condom.html) and female condom, diaphragm, and cervical cap. The condom is the only form of birth control that also protects against [**sexually transmitted diseases**](http://www.healthofchildren.com/S/Sexually-Transmitted-Diseases.html) , including human [**immunodeficiency**](http://www.healthofchildren.com/I-K/Immunodeficiency.html) virus (HIV) that causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).
* Spermicides: These medications kill sperm on contact. Most spermicides contain nonoxynyl-9. Spermicides come in many different forms such as jelly, foam, tablets, and even a transparent film. All are placed in the vagina. Spermicides work best when they are used at the same time as a barrier method.
* Intrauterine devices (IUDs): These devices are inserted into the uterus, where they stay from one to ten years. An IUD prevents the fertilized egg from implanting in the lining of the uterus and may have other effects as well.
* Tubal ligation: This medical procedure is a permanent form of contraception for women. Each fallopian tube is either tied or burned closed. The sperm cannot reach the egg, and the egg cannot travel to the uterus.
* Vasectomy: This medical procedure is a the male form of sterilization and should be considered permanent. In vasectomy, the vas defrens, the tiny tubes that carry the sperm into the semen, are cut and tied off.

There are many different ways to use birth control. They can also be divided into several groups:

* By mouth (oral): Birth control pills must be taken by mouth every day.
* Injected: Depo Provera is a hormonal medication that is given by injection every three months.
* Implanted: Norplant is a long-acting hormonal form of birth control that is implanted under the skin of the upper arm.
* Vaginal: Spermicides and barrier methods work in the vagina.
* Intra-uterine: The IUD is inserted into the uterus.
* Surgical: Tubal sterilization is a form of surgery. A doctor must perform the procedure in a hospital or surgical clinic. Many women need general anesthesia.

The methods of birth control differ from each other regarding when they are used. Some methods of birth control must be used specifically at the time of sexual intercourse (condoms, diaphragm, cervical cap, spermicides). All other methods of birth control must be working all the time to provide protection (hormonal methods, IUDs, tubal sterilization).

| **Contraception** | | | |
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| **Type of contraceptive** | **Description** | **Use** | **Failure rate per 100 women in one year** |
|  | | | |
| Abstinence | Refraining from intercourse, anal sex, and oral sex | Universally applicable. Also prevents spread of sexually transmitted diseases | 0 |
| Birth control pill | Prescription pill containing estrogen and progestin that suppresses ovulation | Must be taken daily, regardless of the frequency of intercourse | 1-2 |
| Cervical cap with spermicide | Soft rubber cup that fits around the cervix, obtained by prescription | Inserted before intercourse. May be difficult to insert | 17-23, depending on type |
| Condom, female | Lubricated sheath that is inserted into the vagina. Similar in shape to the male condom, with a flexible ring | Applied immediately before intercourse, for single use | 21 |
| Condom, male | Latex or polyurethane sheath placed over erect penis, widely available in drugstores | Applied immediately before intercourse, for single use. Best protection against sexually transmitted diseases | 11 |
| Depo-Provera injection | Injection that inhibits ovulation, obtained by prescription | Injections performed at a doctor's office, once every three months | Less than 1 |
| Diaphragm with spermicide | Dome-shaped rubber disk that covers the cervix, obtained by prescription | Inserted before intercourse and left in place at least six hours after | 17 |
| Douching | Use an over-the-counter feminine douche immediately after intercourse in an effort to wash out the sperm | Sperm travel quickly to the cervix, making this an ineffective method of birth control | 40 |
| IUD (intrauterine device) | T-shaped device inserted in the uterus during a visit to the doctor | Can remain in place for up to one or 10 years, depending on type | Less than 1 |
| Morning-after pill (emergency contraceptive) | Pills similar to regular birth control pills, obtained by prescription | Must be taken within 72 hours of unprotected intercourse | 80% reduction in pregnancy risk |
| Patch | Adhesive patch worn on the skin that releases hormones preventing ovulation. Obtained by prescription | New patch is applied once a week for three weeks, followed by one week without the patch | 1-2 |
| Periodic abstinence | Refraining from intercourse when conception is likely | Requires regular menstrual cycles and close monitoring of body functions pertaining to ovulation | 20 |
| Spermicide alone | A foam, cream, jelly, film, or suppository, or tablet containing nonoxynol-9 | Depending on product, inserted between five and 90 minutes before intercourse; usually left in place at least six to eight hours after | 20-50, depending on product |
| Withdrawal | Having intercourse, but removing the male penis before ejaculation | Not recommended for teens, and some seminal fluid leaks before ejaculation, making it an ineffective method of birth control | 27 |

* Spermicides: Some women and men are allergic to spermicides or find them irritating to the skin.
* IUD: The device is a foreign object that stays inside the uterus, and the uterus tries to get it out. A woman may have heavier menstrual periods and more menstrual cramping with an IUD in place.
* Tubal ligation: Some women report increased menstrual discomfort after this surgery. It is not known if this side effect is related to the tubal ligation itself.

REFERENCE

<http://www.healthofchildren.com/C/Contraception.html#ixzz6LOBB9lt7>

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)