AUGOYE OMESIRI

ANATOMY

18/MHS01/094

**Contraceptives and Examples of Them**

Contraception aims to prevent pregnancy.

A woman can get pregnant if a man's sperm reaches one of her eggs (ova).

Contraception tries to stop this happening by:

* keeping the egg and sperm apart
* stopping egg production
* stopping the combined sperm and egg (fertilised egg) attaching to the lining of the womb

Contraception is free for most people in the UK. Condoms can also be bought in pharmacies and supermarkets.

With 15 methods to choose from, you can find one that suits you best.

Barrier methods, such as [condoms](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/male-condoms/), are a form of contraception that help to protect against both [sexually transmitted infections (STIs)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sexually-transmitted-infections-stis/) and pregnancy.

You should use condoms to protect both your sexual health and that of your partner, no matter what other contraception you're using to prevent pregnancy.

* Condom

The condom is the only form of contraception that protects against most STIs as well as preventing pregnancy. This method of contraception can be used on demand, is hormone free and can easily be carried with you. And it comes in male and female varieties.

Male condoms are rolled onto an erect penis and act as a physical barrier, preventing sexual fluids from passing between people during sex. The female condom is placed into the vagina right before sex. Based on typical use, the female condom is not quite as effective as the male latex condom and it may take a little practice to get used to.

Pros include: It’s the best protection against STIs; can be used on demand; hormone free.

Cons include: It can tear or come off during sex if not used properly; some people are allergic to latex condoms.

## The Oral Contraceptive Pill

It’s the little tablet taken once a day. The oral contraceptive pill is the [most commonly reported method of contraception used by Australian women](http://www.roymorgan.com/findings/6542-new-era-of-womens-contraception-201511112207). There are a few different types of pill to choose from, so it’s about finding the one that’s right for you. The combined pill contains estrogen and progestin and mini pill contains only one [hormone](https://www.your-life.com/en/your-body/general/#wcd__anchor-nav__anchor-item__hormones), a progestin. The pill can have many benefits, however remembering to take it on time is a must.

Pros of taking the pill include: Highly effective when used correctly; permits sexual spontaneity and doesn’t interrupt sex; some pills may even reduce heavy and painful periods and/or may have a positive effect on acne.

Cons include: Forgetting to take your pill means it won’t be as effective; it can only be used by women; is not suitable for women who can't take oestrogen-containing contraception; it does not protect against STIs.

The pill is only available by getting a prescription from a medical professional so visit [your local doctor](https://www.qld.gov.au/health/contacts/service-finder) or [sexual health clinic](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/sex-health/services/default.asp)

## Intrauterine Device (IUD)

This small, T-shaped device is made from made of material containing progesterone hormone or plastic and copper and is fitted inside a woman’s uterus by a trained healthcare provider. It's a long-acting and reversible method of contraception, which can stay in place for three to 10 years, depending on the type.

Some IUDs contain hormones that are gradually released to prevent pregnancy. The IUD can also be an effective emergency contraception if fitted by a healthcare professional within five days (120 hours) of having unprotected sex.

IUDs containing coppers are 99% effective and the ones containing hormones are 99.8% effective, so you’re about as protected as you possibly can be by a contraceptive method.

Cons include: Irregular bleeding and spotting occurs in the first six months of use; requires a trained healthcare provider for insertion and removal; does not protect against STIs.

## The Contraceptive Implant

In this method, a small, flexible rod is placed under the skin in a woman’s upper arm, releasing a form of the hormone progesterone. The hormone stops the ovary releasing the egg and thickens the cervical mucus making it difficult for sperm to enter the womb. The implant requires a small procedure using local anesthetic to fit and remove the rod and needs to be replaced after three years.

Pros of the implant include: Highly effective; doesn’t interrupt sex; is a long-lasting, reversible contraceptive option.

Cons include: Requires a trained healthcare provider for insertion and removal; sometimes there can be irregular bleeding initially; does not protect against STIs.

* Emergency Contraception Pill (The ‘Morning After’ Pill)

The [Emergency Contraception Pill](http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/21/72/44/emergency-contraception) can be used to prevent pregnancy after sex if contraception wasn’t used, a condom has broken during sex, or a woman has been sexually assaulted.

While it is sometimes call the ‘Morning After’ pill, it can actually be effective for up to five days after having unprotected sex. The sooner it is taken, the more effective it is; when taken in the first three days after sex, it prevents about 85% of expected pregnancies.

This pill contains special doses of female hormones. Any woman can take the emergency contraception pill, even those who cannot take other oral contraceptive pills. It can be bought over the counter at a pharmacy or chemist without a prescription.

The common side effects of the emergency contraceptive include nausea, vomiting and the next period may be early or delayed. Emergency contraception does not protect against STIs.