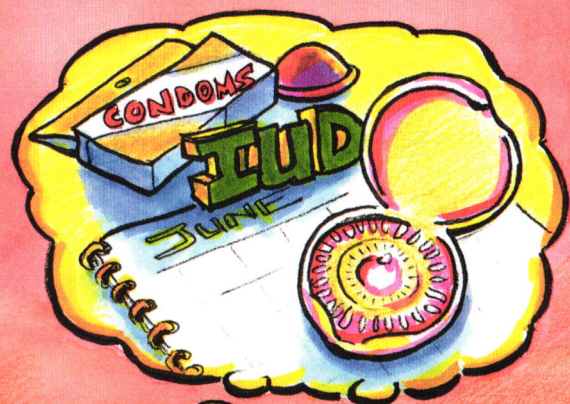


PREGNANCY PREVENTION

50 Things You Need to Know About Birth Control



PROTECT YOURSELF

50 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BIRTH CONTROL

1. If you are sexually active, using birth control will lower your risk of pregnancy.

- Both men and women need to take responsibility for using birth control.
- There are many safe methods of birth control. Some work better than others to prevent pregnancy.
- Your birth control will be most effective if you always use it correctly.
- Not having vaginal intercourse is the only way to be sure you or your partner won't become pregnant.



6. Latex condoms help prevent pregnancy and protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

- Polyurethane (plastic) and polyisoprene (synthetic rubber) condoms will also do both.
- These types of condoms prevent the exchange of body fluids that can pass certain STIs like HIV (the virus that causes AIDS).
- Lambskin or natural condoms can prevent pregnancy but do not protect against STIs or HIV.
- For people allergic to latex, condoms made from polyurethane or polyisoprene are good alternatives.
- A female condom is made of a non-latex rubber called nitrile.
- Look for condoms at convenience stores, drugstores and clinics. You can also buy them in vending machines or online.
- Condoms can break down over time. Store them properly. Check the expiration date.
- For every 100 women using only a condom for birth control, 18 to 21 per year may get pregnant.



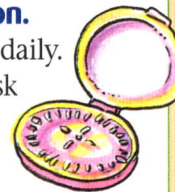
15. Long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) methods include implants and IUDs.

- An implant is a thin rod placed under the skin of the upper arm. It slowly releases a hormone to prevent pregnancy.
- The IUD is a small device that is put into a woman's uterus. It contains copper or hormones that prevent pregnancy.
- The implant is effective for three years. An IUD can last from three to 10 years.
- The most common side effect of an implant is irregular bleeding. An IUD may cause cramping and heavy periods.
- For every 100 women using an implant or IUD, less than one per year may get pregnant.



21. Hormone methods include birth control pills, patches, rings or an injection.

- Birth control pills need to be taken daily.
- If you miss one or more pills the risk of pregnancy goes up; you may need to use another form of birth control, like a condom.
- Skin patches are changed once a week for three weeks. No patch is worn on the fourth week when a woman has her period.
- The ring is worn inside the vagina for three weeks of the month.
- Injections must be given by a health care provider.
- Possible side effects of hormone methods include: nausea, headache, breast tenderness, weight gain and irregular bleeding.
- For every 100 women using birth control pills, patches or rings, about nine may get pregnant in a year of using one of these methods.
- About six out of 100 women per year may become pregnant using the hormone injection method.



30. The diaphragm, cervical cap and sponge are barrier methods. They work by covering a woman's cervix so sperm can't reach the egg.

- The diaphragm and cervical cap are put into the vagina before sex. They must always be used with a spermicide.
- The sponge is also put inside the vagina. It has a spermicide built in.
- If you get a rash from using spermicides, choose another form of birth control. A rash may increase the risk of becoming infected with HIV or another STI.
- For every 100 women using barrier methods, 12 to 24 per year may get pregnant.



35. Sterilization or fertility awareness are other options.

- Having the fallopian tubes tied or blocked are sterilization options for women.
- A vasectomy is an operation a man can have that closes the tubes that carry sperm.
- These methods are meant to be permanent. They are choices for people who do not plan to have children.
- Fertility awareness is when a woman tracks her menstrual cycle and does not have sex around the time that she can become pregnant.
- This method can be a good choice for couples who are willing to risk a pregnancy.

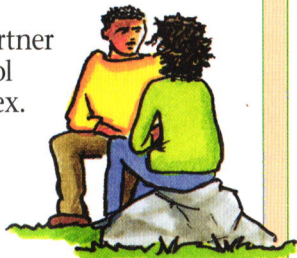


41. Emergency contraception (EC) can be used if your regular birth control failed or was forgotten.

- 42. EC can be used if you were forced to have sex.
- 43. EC is most effective if used within 72 hours of unprotected sex.
- 44. EC does not prevent STIs.
- 45. You can get EC without a prescription at a drugstore. You can also get it at a family planning clinic or from your health care provider.

46. Make sure you understand how to use your birth control method – before you have sex.

- 47. A health care provider can answer your questions.
- 48. Talk with your partner about birth control before you have sex. Say, “I’d like to talk about birth control.” If your partner doesn’t want to talk, rethink your decision to have sex.



- 49. You and your partner may want to decide together what type of birth control to use and who will take responsibility for it.

50. If you don't want to have a baby, use birth control every time you have sex!



If you are sexually active, visit your health care provider to talk about which type of birth control will work best for you. Look inside to learn about birth control options.

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Family Planning
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This pamphlet is not a substitute for professional medical care. If you have questions or concerns, please talk with a health care provider.

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