

Abstinence and Birth Control Methods

Method	What is it?	How effective is it?	What do I need to know?	What do I need to consider?
Abstinence	Choosing NOT to engage in a sexual relationship	100% effective, if used properly	The only method that is 100% effective in preventing STIs and pregnancy.	Must be willing to make the commitment
Sterilization	Operation that makes a man or woman unable to have children (vasectomy for men, tubal ligation for women).	More than 99% effective, if used properly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No preparation before intercourse Will never need another method of birth control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surgery must be done by a doctor Does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs) Slight risk of bleeding or complications occurring after surgery Permanent (cannot be reversed) <p>Health risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small chance of infection after surgery If pregnancy occurs, there is a high risk of tubal pregnancy
Intrauterine Device (IUD) <i>Paragard</i>	Small soft plastic device which contains copper and is placed in the uterus	More than 99% effective, if used properly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hormone free Lasts up to 10 years Can increase menstrual flow and cramping Can increase chance of spotting between periods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No protection against STIs Must be inserted by a health care provider. <p>Health Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased chance of pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) If woman becomes pregnant IUD must be removed Risk of puncturing the uterus
Intrauterine System (IUS) <i>Liletta</i>	Hormone (progestin) releasing IUS which is placed in uterus	More than 99% effective, if used properly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lasts for 4 years Releases progestin to help with heavy periods Periods over time become shorter, lighter or may even stop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No protection against STIs Must be inserted by a health care provider. <p>Health Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased chance of pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) If woman becomes pregnant IUD must be removed Risk of puncturing the uterus
Nexplanon	Flexible plastic rod the size of a matchstick that is put under the skin of your arm by a health care provider (progestin)	More than 99% Effective, if used properly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to use Lasts up to 3 years No preparation necessary Pregnancy is possible almost immediately after removing Can be used when breastfeeding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No protection against STIs Must be inserted by a health care provider Irregular menstrual bleeding - increased bleeding, spotting or no bleeding

NOT A METHOD OF BIRTH CONTROL: Withdrawal, or the act of pulling the penis out of the vagina before ejaculation, is not a method of birth control. If you have done this before and have not gotten pregnant consider yourself lucky. Remember, if you don't want to get pregnant, choose a more effective method of birth control.

Method	What is it?	How effective is it?	What do I need to know?	What do I need to consider?
Depo Provera Shot	Artificial hormone (progestin) which is injected into the body	More than 99% effective, if used properly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to use • Can be used by breastfeeding women • No preparation necessary • Lasts for 3 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term Depo users may develop decreased bone density unless taking extra calcium • No protection against STIs • Irregular bleeding may cause heavy periods, light periods or no periods at all
Pills	Artificial hormones (estrogen and progestin) which are taken by mouth daily	99% effective, if used properly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can improve acne • Less chance of cramping and bleeding-lighter periods • Doesn't interfere with sex • Easy to use • May help protect against endometrial and ovarian cancer • Helps protect against PID 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No protection against STIs • May cause headaches, nausea, weight gain, spotting between periods, and moodiness • Needs to see health care provider for prescription • Must be taken daily at the same time • Health risk: small chance of blood clots leading to stroke or heart attack
Ring	Soft, flexible, transparent ring (2 inches in diameter) that is inserted into the vagina which releases hormones (progestin and estrogen)	99% effective, if used properly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can improve acne • Less chance of cramping and bleeding – lighter periods • Easy to use • Inserted ring protects user for 4 weeks against pregnancy • No preparation necessary before intercourse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No protection against STIs • May cause headaches, nausea, weight gain, spotting between periods and moodiness • Must be comfortable inserting and removing ring from vagina • Health risk: small chance of blood clots leading to stroke or heart attack
Patch	Thin, beige flexible square patch which delivers hormones (progestin and estrogen) into the body through the skin	99% effective, if used properly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to use • No preparation necessary before intercourse • Do not need to remember to take on a daily basis • Can improve acne • Less chance of cramping and bleeding – lighter periods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No protection against STIs • May increase breast tenderness • May cause weight gain, nausea, headaches, menstrual or abdominal cramps • May have irritation of the skin where patch is applied • May have irregular menstrual bleeding • Health risk: small chance of blood clots leading to stroke or heart attack
Condoms	Thin piece of latex or polyurethane that fits over the erect penis and acts as a barrier preventing pregnancy	98% effective, increased effectiveness when used with a spermicide <small>(Source: Contraceptive Technology, 20th Revised Edition, Ardent Media, New York, NY, 2011)</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can buy at store • No prescription needed • Easy to use • Only birth control method that “may” help protect against sexually transmitted diseases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritation of the vagina or penis to those with latex allergies • Needs to be put on before intercourse

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