

BIRTH CONTROL



Your Choices!

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

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Your Future

Is Important!

Having sex can change your life and others' lives in powerful ways. For example, research has shown that when pregnancies are wanted:

- ✓ Women and their children are healthier.
- ✓ Parents and children get more education.
- ✓ Families have more money.
- ✓ Marriages are more likely to last.
- ✓ Violence among family members is less likely.
- ✓ Fathers are more likely to stay involved in their children's lives.

Thinking carefully before you have sex makes good sense.

This brochure can help you to make the decision about whether or not to have sex. It provides information about how women become pregnant, how to prevent unwanted pregnancy, and how to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), also known as sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Take Control of Your Life!

How Do Women

GET PREGNANT?

When a man becomes sexually excited, a few thousand sperm often leak out of his penis. If the man continues to be sexually stimulated, he may have an orgasm (ejaculate). As the orgasm begins, millions of sperm travel up the vas deferens, over the bladder, through the prostate gland, into the urethra, and out of the penis. The sperm are moved along this path by rhythmic pulses. When the penis is inside the vagina (intercourse), sperm may land inside the vagina. Sperm may also get into the vagina by landing near the vagina and swimming into it. Pregnancy can occur if any sperm land near or inside the vagina. Sperm swim up the vagina, through the opening of the cervix, through the uterus, and into the fallopian tubes. Sperm can live for 3-5 days inside the woman. If an egg is in one of the tubes, a sperm can join it (fertilize it). This joining of the egg and sperm (fertilization) can happen up to 5 days after couple has had sex. The fertilized egg travels, for a few days, down the fallopian tubes and into the uterus. After the fertilized egg has been in the uterus for about 1-2 days, it sticks to (implants in) the inside of the uterus. The egg and sperm form a single cell that divides into more cells. Over the next nine months, these cells develop into a baby. When no birth control is used, 85 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year.

A WOMAN CAN GET PREGNANT EVEN IF:

- She is bleeding or spotting.
- She doesn't have an orgasm.
- She has sex while standing up.
- She douches or takes a bath right after having sex.
- The man pulls his penis out of the vagina before he comes.
- She hasn't had her first period yet.
- It is her first time to have sex.
- The man has been wrapping plastic around his penis.
- The couple has sex under water.

A PERSON CAN GET AN STI OR HIV EVEN IF:

- She douches after having sex.
- He or she urinates or washes their sexual body parts after sex.
- A person has oral or anal sex.

Condoms help to prevent the spread of STIs.

THE FEMALE BODY

Ovary: Place where thousands of eggs are stored. There is one ovary on each side of the uterus.

Ovulation: An egg pops out of one ovary each month.

Egg: Cell from a female that combines with sperm to make a baby.

Fallopian Tube: A tube that leads the egg from the ovary to the uterus.

Uterus (Womb): A hollow pear-shaped place made of strong muscles where a baby grows before birth.

Endometrium: Inner surface of the womb where blood and nutrients build up each month. If there is no pregnancy, the blood and nutrients flow out of the vagina (menstruation).

Cervix: Firm round nickel-sized tissue at the end of the vagina that leads into the uterus.

Os: Small opening in the cervix which stretches wider for the baby to pass through during birth.

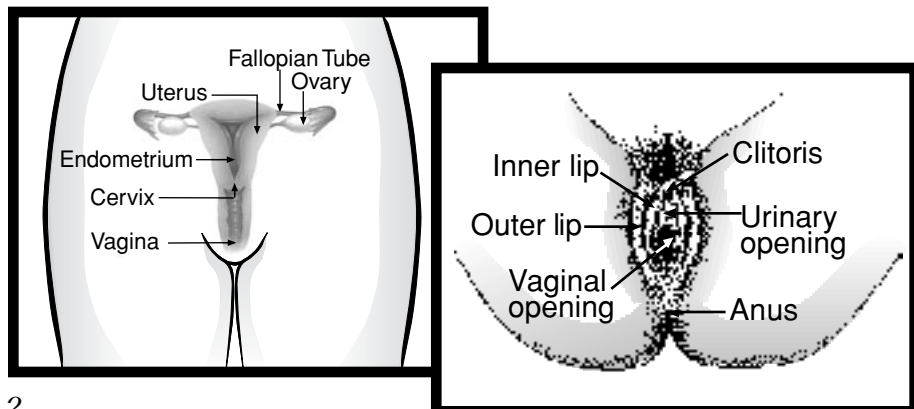
Clitoris: A pearl-sized mound of skin which, when stimulated, may lead to orgasm.

Outer Lips (Labia Majora): Larger pair of folds of skin that usually have hair and surround the clitoris and urethra.

Inner Lips (Labia Minora): Thinner smooth pair of folds of skin without hair that surround the clitoris and urethra.

Urethra (Urinary opening): Tube that carries urine out of the body.

Vagina: Tube where the penis is during sexual intercourse. During birth the baby goes through the vagina to be born.



THE MALE BODY

Scrotum: Skin sac that holds the testicles.

Testicles: Two egg-shaped organs where sperm are made.

Epididymis: Tubes which carry sperm from the testicles to the vas deferens.

Vas Deferens: Tubes which carry sperm from epididymis to the urethra.

Sperm Duct (Spermatic Duct): Tube that carries blood supply to testicles and sperm to urethra.

Urethra: Tube that carries urine and semen out of penis.

Semen: Mixture of sperm and other fluids.

Sperm: Cell from a male that combines with an egg from a female to make a baby.

Seminal Vesicles: Glands which produce fluid that combine with sperm.

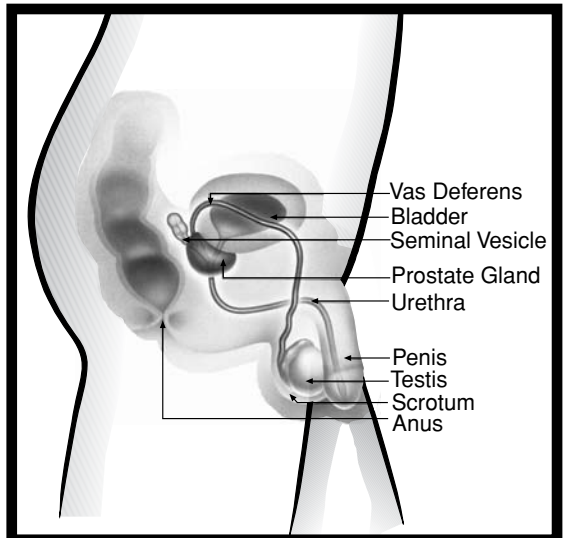
Penis: Shaft with an enlarged tip (glans) that may put sperm into the vagina.

Corpus Cavernosum: Two tubes inside the penis which fill up with blood to make the penis hard when a man becomes sexually excited.

Corpus Spongiosum: A column of erectile tissue in the center of the penis and surrounding the urethra. When filled with blood it enlarges and causes the penis to swell and become erect.

Foreskin: Skin covering the end of the penis. The foreskin is sometimes removed by a doctor or religious person (circumcision).

Prostate Gland: Walnut-sized gland which surrounds the urethra and can be felt inside the rectum. It contracts rhythmically to squeeze the semen out when a man has an orgasm (comes).



What Is *Abstinence?*

Abstinence means different things to different people. Some people think that abstinence means not having vaginal sex. Others think abstinence means not having vaginal, oral, or anal sex. Still, others believe that kissing and taking off clothes is off-limits during abstinence.

However you define abstinence, it is important to know that STIs can be spread through fluids that come from the mouth, penis, and vagina. This means that someone can give an STI to a partner by having vaginal, oral, or anal sex. In addition, while condoms offer excellent protection against HIV/AIDS and STIs that are spread through body fluids, some STIs can be spread through parts of the body that condoms do not cover. The only sure way to prevent the spread of STIs and pregnancy is to avoid having vaginal, oral, and anal sex.

Is Abstinence A Good Choice For You?

- ✓ Do you believe that it is wrong to have sex until you're married?
- ✓ Have you been dating for only a short length of time?
- ✓ Are you in an unhappy relationship?
- ✓ Are you being pressured to have sex?
- ✓ Do you believe that having sex will make you feel more independent or cool?
- ✓ Do you think that having sex will cure your loneliness?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then abstinence may be a good choice for you.

Abstinence

How Abstinence Works:

- The penis and vagina do not touch. Sperm do not come anywhere close to the vagina, so the sperm and egg never meet.

How Abstinence Is Used:

- Works best when both partners decide to practice abstinence.
- Decide ahead of time what activities you will say “no” to.
- Discuss your decisions with your partner in advance.
- Say “no” so it is clear you mean it.
- Avoid high pressure sexual situations.
- Avoid drugs and alcohol.
- Do not let the penis and the vagina touch.
- Do not allow any of the man’s sperm or “come” to get close to the vagina.
- Have a back-up method of protection in case you decide to have sex.
- Learn about “emergency contraception” in case you have unprotected sex.

Benefits:

- Free.
- No side effects.
- Anyone can practice abstinence.
- Protects against an unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (STIs), and HIV/AIDS.
- Helps protect against infertility and cancers of the sexual body parts.
- Individual decides for him or herself whether or not s/he wants to have sex.
- Can use while breastfeeding.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

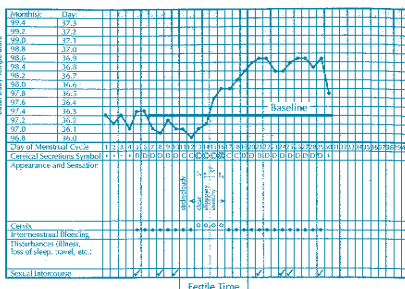
- You may not have another back-up method if you decide to have sex.
- Unprotected sex may lead to unwanted pregnancy, STIs or HIV/AIDS.
- Unprotected oral or anal sex may lead to STIs or HIV/AIDS.
- The desire to have sex may go unfulfilled.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- When both partners are completely committed to practicing this method 100% of the time, it is 100% effective. However, typically 25 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year, while practicing abstinence, because they do not practice abstinence all of the time.



Natural Family Planning



How Natural Family Planning Works:

- Women learn to recognize their fertile time (when they can get pregnant) and avoid having sex during that time.

How Natural Family Planning Is Used:

- Special classes teach women and couples to notice and keep record of certain body signs such as temperature, vaginal mucus, and menstrual periods so they will know when they are fertile.
- Avoid sex during fertile time.

Benefits:

- Teaches about the female body and how to plan a pregnancy.
- Will know more about how to get pregnant when ready.
- No medications or side effects.
- Woman may be more likely to notice if she has a vaginal infection.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- No protection against STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- Must avoid sex during fertile time.
- If use vaginal products or have vaginal infection, irregular menstrual periods, illness, change in routine, or lack of sleep, it may be hard to tell when you are fertile.
- Partner must cooperate.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 25 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year while practicing the natural family planning method. Works best when sex only happens after ovulation.



Lactational Amenorrhea Method (LAM)



How LAM Works:

- When a woman breastfeeds, there are hormones in her body that prevent the egg from leaving the ovary.
- Changes lining of uterus so that a fertilized egg may not implant.

LAM Works Only If:

- You breastfeed your baby and do not give baby any other food, formula or drinks.
- You breastfeed your baby every 4 to 6 hours day and night, no exceptions. LAM may not work as well if you give your baby a pacifier.
- You have not started your monthly period since your baby was born.
- Your baby is younger than 6 months.

LAM Does Not Work If:

- You pump the milk instead of breastfeeding.
- Your baby is older than 6 months.
- You have started your period since your baby was born.
- You give your baby any other food, formula or drinks.

Benefits:

- Do not have to visit clinic for birth control.
- Does not interrupt sex.
- Breastfeeding is good for mother and baby. Helps keep baby healthy.
- Can be used with some other methods including condoms, spermicides, IUD, Depo-provera, mini-pills, Norplant, natural family planning, and sterilization.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- No protection from STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- May not work if you have sudden schedule changes.
- May not work if mother and baby are separated a lot.
- Must be ready to use another method when LAM will not work.
- Cervical caps and sponges do not work as well as they did before baby was born.
- Mother may have less milk if using birth control methods that have estrogen.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- If used perfectly, 2 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year while using the LAM method.

Withdrawal (Coitus Interruptus)

How Withdrawal Works:

- Prevents sperm from reaching the egg.

How Withdrawal Is Done:

- The couple decides ahead of time that they are going to use the withdrawal method.
- Right before intercourse, the man should urinate and wipe off the tip of his penis to remove any sperm from a previous ejaculation.
- The man takes his penis out of the vagina and away from the vaginal area before he ejaculates (comes).
- If the man accidentally ejaculates before he withdraws, consider emergency contraception.

Advantages:

- Costs nothing.
- No need for medication or devices.
- There are no medical side effects.
- Can be used while breastfeeding.
- In time, the man may get better at knowing when he will ejaculate.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- No protection against STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- The man may accidentally ejaculate inside the vagina.
- The man and/or the woman may feel frustrated.
- Requires self-control.
- Requires trust.
- Some men have difficulty knowing when they will ejaculate.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 27 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year while practicing the withdrawal method.

Condoms (for Males)

How the Condom Works:

- Condom covers an erect (hard) penis to keep sperm from entering vagina.
- Some brands of condoms have spermicide that kills sperm.

How To Use The Condom:

- Each and every time you have sex, use a new condom.
- Store condoms in cool dry place.
- Have several condoms ready to use.
- Wash hands with plain soap and water.
- Take care not to damage condom when opening package.
- Make sure vagina is moist when penis enters. May use water based lubricants.
- Do not use oil based lubricants or vaginal medications with latex condoms, because these will damage latex.
- If un-circumcised, pull foreskin back before putting condom on.
- While putting condom on, pinch tip of condom to remove air pocket.
- Roll condom onto erect penis before penis touches vagina or any other body openings.
- If start to put condom on the wrong way, throw condom away and use new condom.
- Make sure condom does not slip down at all.
- Hold condom, at the base of the penis, when entering and pulling out of the vagina or other body openings.
- Remove condom immediately after ejaculation (coming).

Advantages:

- Latex and plastic condoms help protect against STIs including HIV/AIDS, infertility, and other serious health problems.
- Easy to carry, use, and buy. No prescription necessary.
- Can be used while breastfeeding.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- Some STIs can infect the body through places the condom does not cover.
- Condoms made from natural membranes should not be used for protection against STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- Condom may break or slip off during sex.
- Putting a condom on may seem like an interruption.
- Partner may not want to use condoms.
- May develop or have allergies to latex rubber (may use condoms made of polyurethane).
- Sensation may be different when using a condom.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 15 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year while condoms are used.
- Fewer women get pregnant when using spermicide with condoms.



Condoms (for Females)

How the Condom Works:

- Condom lines the inside of the vagina to keep sperm from reaching the egg.

How to Use The Female Condom:

- Have several female condoms ready to use.
- Use a new condom each and every time you have sex, if outer ring gets pushed inside, and/or if condom comes out of the vagina.
- Wash hands with plain soap and water.
- Add lubricant (comes with condom) to inside of female condom or to penis.
- May use with spermicides.
- Slide inner ring up into the vagina as far as it will go.
- Make sure outer ring stays outside vagina to cover labia (lips) and base of the man's penis.
- Make sure penis goes inside female condom.
- Remove right after ejaculation (coming), before standing up. Squeeze and twist outer ring to keep ejaculate from leaking out while removing. Do not flush.
- Do not use with male condom. (Condoms may stick together.)



Advantages:

- Helps protect against some STIs and HIV/AIDS, infertility, and other serious medical problems.
- Easy to buy and carry. No prescription necessary.
- May insert up to 8 hours before having sex.
- May be used while breastfeeding.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- Some STIs can infect the body through places the condom does not cover.
- May break or slip out during sex.
- Outer ring left outside of vagina may not feel comfortable.
- Putting female condom on may seem like an interruption.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 21 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year while using female condoms.
- Fewer women get pregnant when using spermicide.

Spermicidal Foam, Jelly, Cream, Suppositories, and Contraceptive Film



How The Spermicides Work:

- Spermicides kill sperm.

How To Use Spermicides:

- Have an extra supply close by, in case you run out.
- Use before each act of sex.
- Shake foam can at least 20 times before filling applicator.
- Insert spermicide deep into vagina before sex.
- Read product instruction on waiting times needed before sex.
- Leave spermicide in place and do not douche for 6 hours after sex.
- Wash any applicators with plain soap and warm water.

Advantages:

- Easy to buy. No prescription necessary.
- May serve as lubricant.
- Can be used while breastfeeding.
- Can be used with other methods of birth control.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- Does not protect against HIV or certain other types of STIs.
- May have more vaginal or urinary tract infections.
- May be difficult to tell when foam can is empty.
- May use too little spermicide.
- May irritate penis or vagina.
- Applying spermicide may seem like an interruption.
- May become allergic to chemical in spermicide.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 29 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year while using spermicides.



The Sponge

How the Sponge Works:

- A polyurethane sponge fits inside vagina and covers the cervix.
- Blocks sperm from reaching the egg.
- Sponge has spermicide in it that kills sperm.

How The Sponge Is Used:

- Contact your clinician before using the sponge if you have recently experienced childbirth, miscarriage or abortion.
- Sponges, like condoms, may be purchased over-the-counter.
- Have a back up method available to use during your menstrual period.
- Wash hands with plain soap and water.
- Moisten sponge with a few drops of clean water, and squeeze it to make it sudsy. Do not rinse or squeeze the suds out before inserting.
- Before having sex, fold sponge and insert it into vagina with loop facing away from cervix. Be careful not to damage sponge with fingernails.
- Make sure the sponge completely covers your cervix.
- Make sure vagina is moist when penis enters; may add lubricant.
- Do not remove sponge or douche for 6-8 hours after having sex.
- Do not leave sponge in for more than 24 hours after having sex.
- Before removing sponge, wash your hands, then bear down, as if you're having a bowel movement. Pull loop on sponge gently with one finger. You may also slip a finger between sponge and cervix and tilt the sponge up and away from cervix.
- If having repeated acts of sex, use new a sponge every 24 hours.
- Sponge should be removed within 24 hours after it was inserted.
- After removing sponge, look at it to make sure it isn't torn and none is left inside the vagina, then throw away.
- Use another method instead of sponge during menstrual period.



Advantages:

- May use with male condom.
- Protects for 24 hours, so may insert in advance.
- May have sex repeatedly without using a new sponge. Replace sponge every 24 hours.
- Do not have to be fitted by a clinician.
- Can be used while breastfeeding.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- Does not protect against HIV/AIDS or other STIs.
- May have or develop allergy to spermicide in sponge.
- Sponge may shift out of position. May need practice inserting.
- Sponge may lead to vaginal dryness or urinary tract infections.
- Sponge should not be used during menstrual period.
- Does not work as well for women who have carried pregnancies.
- Toxic Shock Syndrome (Rare)-see your clinician immediately if you get sudden high fever, vomiting, diarrhea, dizziness, faintness, flu-like symptoms, or sunburn like rash.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 16 out of 100 women (who have not carried a pregnancy) get pregnant in a year while using the sponge.
- With typical use, 32 out of 100 women (who have carried a pregnancy) get pregnant in a year while using the sponge.

Cervical Cap

How The Cap Works:

- A soft latex rubber cup fits inside vagina and covers the cervix.
- Blocks sperm from reaching the egg.
- Holds spermicidal cream or jelly that kills sperm.

How The Cap Is Used:

- A clinician fits the woman for a cap and teaches her how to use it.
- Wash hands with plain soap and water.
- Hold cap up to light to check for holes, tears, or cracks.
- Apply spermicidal cream or jelly to inside of cap.
- Insert cap into vagina at least 30 minutes before sex.
- Use another birth control method during menstrual period. Do not use the cap.
- When inserting cap, make sure cap completely covers the cervix.
- Make sure vagina is moist when penis enters. May use water-based lubricants.
- Do not use oil-based lubricants or vaginal medications with latex caps, because these will damage the latex.
- Do not douche or remove cap for 6-8 hours after having sex.
- Do not leave cap in for more than 24 hours after having sex.
- To remove cap, wash your hands, press on the cap rim until the suction is broken, hook your finger around the rim and pull it sideways out of the vagina.
- Wash spermicide applicator and cap with plain soap and warm water, then dry and store in a clean, cool, dry place.



Advantages:

- If care for cap properly, may use cap repeatedly.
- May use cap with male condom.
- May insert in advance.
- No need to add more spermicide for repeated acts of sex.
- May protect against infertility.
- Can be used while breastfeeding.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- Does not protect against infection with HIV/AIDS or other STIs.
- May have or develop allergy to spermicide or latex.
- Cap may shift out of position. May need practice inserting.
- Cap may lead to vaginal/cervical irritation.
- Men may not like the feel of the cap during sex.
- A cap that does not fit well may cause cramps, bladder, or rectal pain (may need to be refitted).
- Must replace and be refitted after 2 years. Must wait 6 weeks after having a baby, miscarriage, or abortion to get fitted or refitted for cap by a clinician.
- Toxic Shock Syndrome (Rare)-see your clinician immediately if you get sudden high fever, vomiting, diarrhea, dizziness, faintness, flu-like symptoms, or a rash.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 16 out of 100 women (who have not carried a pregnancy) get pregnant in a year while using the cap.
- With typical use, 32 out of 100 women (who have carried a pregnancy) get pregnant in a year while using the cap.

Diaphragm

How The Diaphragm Works:

- A soft latex rubber cup fits inside vagina and covers the cervix.
- Blocks sperm from reaching the egg.
- Holds spermicidal cream or jelly that kills sperm.

How The Diaphragm Is Used:

- Woman is fitted for diaphragm by a clinician.
- Wash hands with plain soap and water.
- Hold diaphragm up to light to check for holes, tears, or cracks.
- Apply spermicidal cream or jelly to inside of diaphragm.
- Insert diaphragm into vagina as instructed by clinician.
- If having sex again, add more spermicide without removing diaphragm.
- Make sure vagina is moist when penis enters. May use water-based lubricants.
- Do not use vaginal medications or oil-based lubricants with latex diaphragms, because these will damage latex.
- Do not remove the diaphragm and do not douche for 6-8 hours after having sex.
- Do not leave diaphragm in for more than 24 hours after having sex.
- To remove the diaphragm, wash your hands, hook your finger over the rim of diaphragm and pull it down and out of the vagina.
- Wash spermicide applicator and diaphragm with plain soap and warm water, then dry and store in a clean, cool, dry place.



Advantages:

- Diaphragm can be used repeatedly if cared for properly.
- Helps protect against infertility, and cervical cancer.
- May be used with male condom.
- Diaphragm protects for 6 hours, so may insert in advance.
- Diaphragm may be worn during menstrual period.
- Can be used while breastfeeding.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- Does not protect against HIV/AIDS or other STIs.
- May have or develop allergy to spermicide or latex.
- May need practice to learn how to put diaphragm in.
- Diaphragm may shift out of position.
- Diaphragm may lead to vaginal/cervical irritation.
- May have more vaginal or urinary tract infections.
- Diaphragm must be re-fitted after pregnancy, abortion, miscarriage, and if woman loses or gains more than 10 lbs.
- Must have clinician replace diaphragm after 2 years.
- A poorly fitting diaphragm may cause cramps, bladder, or rectal pain (may need to be refitted).
- Men may not like the feel of the diaphragm during sex.
- Toxic Shock Syndrome (Rare)-see your clinician immediately if you get sudden high fever, vomiting, diarrhea, dizziness, faintness, flu-like symptoms, or a sunburn like rash.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 16 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year while using the diaphragm.

Depo-Provera (progestin)



How Depo-Provera Works:

- Stops egg from leaving the ovary.
- Changes the lining of the uterus so that a fertilized egg may not implant.
- Prevents sperm from reaching the egg.

How Depo-Provera Is Used:

- A clinician gives you a hormone injection (shot) every 3 months.
- Use a back up method if you are a week late for a shot.
- Be sure to get enough calcium in your diet (milk, cheese, yogurt etc.).
- See your clinician if you often have very bad headaches, on-going heavy bleeding, or severe abdominal pain.

Advantages:

- Each shot works for 3 months.
- Do not have to interrupt sex.
- May decrease menstrual bleeding and cramping.
- May be used while breastfeeding.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- No protection against STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- May miss or have irregular periods. If this bothers you, see your clinician.
- Must return to clinic every 3 months for an injection.
- May decrease minerals stored in bones which may decrease bone strength.
- Cholesterol levels may get worse.
- May get headaches, dizziness, or fatigue.
- May have breast tenderness, weight gain, or mood changes.
- Side effects may continue for 6-8 months after last shot.
- May take 6-12 months or longer to get pregnant after last shot.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 3 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year while using Depo-Provera.

The Ring

(Estrogen and Progestin)



How The Ring Works:

- Hormones (estrogen and progestin) are released from the ring to prevent pregnancy:
 - Stopping eggs from leaving the ovary.
 - Changing the lining of the uterus so that a fertilized egg may not implant.
 - Preventing sperm from reaching the egg.

How The Ring is Used:

- Store the ring in a cool place until ready to use.
- Ask your health care provider when to insert the ring and whether a back-up method of birth control should be used.
- Press sides of ring together and insert it into the vagina on or before the fifth day of your menstrual period. The exact position of the ring is not important.
- Leave the ring in place for 3 weeks.
- Then, remove it at the same time of day that you inserted it. Dispose of it so that children and pets cannot get to it, but do not flush it down the toilet.
- After one week, insert a new ring on the same day of the week and at the same time of day that you removed the old ring.
- If the ring slips out of the vagina, and it has been out less than 3 hours, rinse with cool water and put it back in. Then use a back-up method for 7 days in a row. If this happens more than once, tell your health care provider.
- If you accidentally leave the ring in place for more than 4 weeks, check to make sure you are not pregnant. Use a back-up method of birth control for 7 days after inserting the new ring.
- See your health care provider if you miss a period.
- Call your health care provider right away if you have: pain in the chest, calf, stomach, or head, shortness of breath, vomiting dizziness, problems with vision or speech, yellowing of the skin or whites of the eyes, heavy bleeding, swelling, or depression.

Advantages:

- No need to do or remember anything every day. Easy to use and very effective.
- No need to interrupt sex.
- Can get pregnant again after you stop using the ring.
- Periods are usually lighter, more regular and with less cramping.
- May improve acne.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

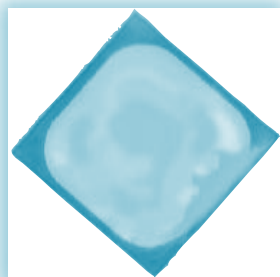
- Does not protect against STIs.
- May delay or prevent breastfeeding.
- May gain weight, have mood changes or get acne, headaches, and/or nausea.
- Common side effects include headache, nausea, weight gain, and vaginal infections, irritation, and discharge.
- Serious side effects include: blood clots, heart attacks, strokes, breast cancer, gall bladder disease, and liver tumors. High blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes can get worse.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use 8 out of 100 women might get pregnant in a year while using the ring.

The Patch

(Estrogen and Progestin)



How The Patch Works:

- A thin patch is placed on the skin that releases hormones that prevent pregnancy.
- Stops egg from leaving the ovary.
- Changes uterus lining so that a fertilized egg may not implant.
- Prevents sperm from reaching the egg.

How The Patch Is Used:

- See your health care provider for a prescription.
- Be careful not to damage the patch when you remove it from the package.
- If you apply the patch within the first 24 hours of your period, no back-up method is needed.
- If you apply the patch on a Sunday after the first 24 hours of your period, use a back-up method of birth control for the first seven days after you start using the patch.
- Clean and dry an area of skin on your buttocks, stomach, back or upper outer arm where you will place the patch. Apply each new patch to a different place on your skin. Never apply the patch to your breasts or to skin that is red, irritated, or cut. Do not apply the patch on top of make-up, lotions, creams, powders, or anything else but clean skin.
- Press firmly on the patch with the palm of your hand for 10 seconds and run your fingers around the edge of the patch to make sure the edges stick well. Check your patch every day to make sure all the edges are sticking.
- Wear the patch for seven days. On the eighth day, take off the patch and put on a new one.
- Do not decorate or write on the patch; doing so may damage it so that it will not work as well.
- When removing the old patch, fold it in half so that the medicine side is covered up before you throw it away. Do **not** flush it down the toilet.
- Apply a new patch once a week for three weeks, then do not wear a patch on the fourth week.
- Begin your next four week cycle by applying a new patch on your normal 'patch change day', no matter when your period begins or ends.
- If your patch comes loose or falls off for less than one day, try to re-apply it or apply a new patch immediately. No back up method is needed.
- If you forget to change your patch during the first week or if your patch comes loose or falls off for more than one day, or if you aren't sure how long, put on a new patch immediately. This will begin a new week. Use a back up method of birth control for seven days.
- Do not try to reapply a patch if it's no longer sticky or if it has been stuck to something besides your skin.
- Store the patch in its package, at room temperature, until you are ready to use it.
- If you are scheduled for any lab tests or need to take other medicine, let your health care provider know you use the patch. Be aware that your patch may interact with over-the-counter or alternative medicines.

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(The Patch, continued from page 9)

- Call your health care provider right away if you miss your period or if you have: pain in the chest, calf, stomach, or head; shortness of breath, vomiting, dizziness, coughing of blood, problems with vision or speech, breast lumps, yellowing of the skin or whites of the eyes, or depression.

Advantages:

- No need to do or remember anything every day.
- No need to interrupt sex.
- Easy to use and very effective.
- It is ok to bathe, swim, exercise, and be where it is humid while wearing the patch.
- May improve acne.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- There may be a higher risk of side effects, such as blood clots with the patch.
- Does not protect against STIs or HIV/AIDS.
- May not work well on women who weigh more than 198 pounds.
- Skin under the patch may get irritated.
- May have irregular vaginal bleeding or spotting. This may stop after a few months. If the bleeding lasts more than a few days or happens every month, contact your health care provider.
- Contact your health care provider if your fingers or ankles start swelling or if you start having problems wearing your contact lenses.
- Skin on the face may darken.
- The patch should not be used while breast feeding.
- May not be able to use the patch, depending on your health history.
- The most common side effects include nausea, mood changes, headache, breast tenderness, and skin irritation where the patch is worn. Less common side effects include: menstrual cramps, appetite changes, loss of scalp hair, rash, vaginal infections, and dizziness.
- Serious side effects will be more likely to happen if you smoke; these include: blood clots, heart attacks, strokes, and breast cancer. Other serious side effects include gall bladder disease, and liver tumors.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 8 out of 100 women might get pregnant in a year while using the patch.

Mini-Pills (progestin)



How mini-pills work:

- Stops egg from leaving the ovary.
- Changes the lining of the uterus so that a fertilized egg may not implant.
- Prevents sperm from reaching the egg.

How Mini-Pills Are Used:

- See clinician to get mini-pills.
- Take a pill every day, at the same time.
- Have a back up method available.
- If you forget to take a mini-pill, take it as soon as you remember, and take today's mini-pill, even if it means taking 2 pills in 1 day. If you are more than 3 hours late, use a back up method for 48 hours. If you miss 2 or more mini-pills in a row, use a back up method and take 2 mini-pills a day for 2 days.
- See your clinician if you have severe lower abdominal pain, frequent severe headaches or delayed periods after they have been regular.

Advantages:

- May have lighter periods with less cramping.
- Fertility returns soon after mini-pills are stopped.
- Do not have to interrupt sex.
- May be used while breastfeeding.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- No protection against STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- Must remember to take a pill at the same time every day.
- May have irregular or no periods.
- May have nausea, slight weight gain, headaches, breast discomfort, mood changes and/or acne.
- If pregnancy occurs, it will be more likely to be a tubal pregnancy (Very Rare).

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 8 out of 100 women might get pregnant in a year while using mini-pills.

Birth Control Pills (estrogen and progestin)



How The Pill Works:

- Stops egg from leaving the ovary.
- Changes uterus lining so that a fertilized egg may not implant.
- Prevents sperm from reaching the egg.

How The Pill Is Used:

- A pill is taken every day at the same time each day.
- See your clinician if you have severe abdominal pain, chest pain, headache, shortness of breath, changes in vision, or severe leg pain.

Advantages:

- Easy to use and very effective.
- Do not have to interrupt sex.
- No loss in fertility after pills are stopped.
- Periods are usually lighter, more regular and have less cramping.
- May improve acne.
- Some pills, when used as directed, can allow you not to have a period for several months.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

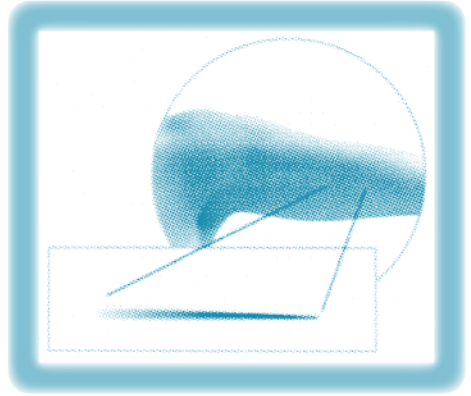
- No protection against STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- Must get pills from a clinician.
- Not all women can take the pill.
- Must remember to take a pill every day.
- May have nausea at first.
- May have weight gain, headaches, breast discomfort, depression, or loss of interest in sex.
- May miss periods or have irregular bleeding.
- Skin on face may darken (like sometimes in pregnancy).
- May not produce as much milk if breastfeeding.
- May get high blood pressure or blood clots (Rare).
- May not be a good choice for women who have had breast cancer, liver disease, stroke, diabetes or blood clots.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, 8 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year while using the pill.



Implantable Contraceptive (progestin)



How the Implantable Contraceptive Works:

- Continually releases a low, steady dose of progestin for a period of up to three years.
- Stops egg from leaving the ovary.
- Changes the lining of the uterus so that a fertilized egg may not implant.
- Prevents sperm from reaching the egg.

How the Implantable Contraceptive Is Used:

- The thin, match-sized, rod implant is placed in the inner side of a woman's upper arm by a clinician in a clinic or doctor's office.
- It can be removed at any time by a clinician in a clinic or doctor's office, after which time the woman returns to her pre-existing fertility level.

Advantages:

- No need to remember to do anything on a schedule.
- The implant works for 3 years.
- It works great.
- Do not have to interrupt sex.

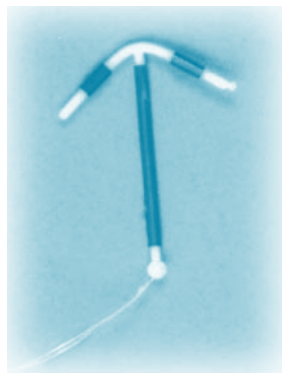
Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- No protection against STIs, including HIV/AIDs.
- May have redness, swelling, and pain at the spot where the rod was implanted and there may be some scarring at insertion site.
- May have headaches and mood swings.
- May have irregular bleeding and spotting or no monthly periods at all.
- May not be a good choice for women who have had breast cancer, liver disease, stroke, diabetes or blood clots.
- Serious side effects will be more likely if you smoke. These include blood clots, heart attacks, and stroke.

How Well Does it Prevent Pregnancy:

- With typical use, less than 1 in 100 women get pregnant in a year when using the implantable contraceptive rod.
- This method may be less effective in women who are very overweight or are taking certain types of medications.

Intra-Uterine Device (IUD)



How The IUD Works:

- A small T-shaped object containing progestin, copper or silver prevents sperm from fertilizing the egg.
- Changes uterus lining so that a fertilized egg may not implant.

How The IUD Is Used:

- An IUD is placed in the uterus by clinician.
- Woman checks IUD strings after each menstrual period.
- Must be replaced as needed (5-10 years) depending on type of IUD.
- Do not attempt to remove IUD yourself.
- See your clinician if you have fever, abdominal pain, pain when having sex, bleeding, discharge, missed period, any STI, or if the strings are missing, longer, or shorter.

Advantages:

- Works for a long time.
- Do not have to interrupt sex.
- Copper-releasing IUD may prevent pregnancy when inserted up to 5 days after unprotected sex.
- Can be used while breastfeeding.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- No protection against STIs including HIV/AIDs.
- If a you get an STI, the infection may be much worse and more damaging.
- IUD may fall out without the woman knowing it.
- Not a good method for women with more than one partner.
- Not a good method for women with partners who have other partners.
- If you become pregnant, there is a higher risk of having a tubal pregnancy.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- With typical use, less than 1 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year while using an IUD.



Sterilization

How Sterilization Works:

Tubal ligation (having your tubes tied):

- Operation blocks a woman's tubes to keep egg from reaching sperm.

Vasectomy:

- Operation blocks a man's tubes to prevent sperm from being released.

How Sterilization Is Used:

- Men and women may have an operation to be sterilized.
- Women may get pregnant until the man's sperm are gone (about 12 weeks after vasectomy). The man must be checked by the physician before having unprotected sex.

Benefits:

- Permanent.
- No need to worry about birth control.
- Does not interrupt sex.
- Penis can still get hard, and man can still ejaculate (come).
- Female sterilization protects against PID.
- Less risk/expense with male sterilization than with female sterilization.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- Requires an operation.
- May feel regret, because sterilization can not be undone.
- No protection against STIs or HIV/AIDs.
- Slight chance of infection or complications after surgery.

How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- Typically, less than 1 out of 100 women might get pregnant in a year after the man or the woman has been sterilized.



Emergency Contraception (EC)



EC May Work in One or More Ways:

- Stops egg from leaving the ovary.
- Changes the lining of the uterus so that a fertilized egg may not implant.
- Prevents sperm from reaching the egg.

How EC Is Used:

- EC pills (ECPs) should not be used as your regular method of birth control, because other methods work better.
- A pill to prevent nausea is taken one hour before taking first ECP.
- The woman takes emergency contraceptive pills. The pills work best if she takes them within 72 hours after having sex, but they may also work if she takes them within 120 hours after having sex.
- Twelve hours later, she may need to take ECP(s) again, depending on the instructions given by the health care provider.
- Do not take any extra pills.
- Do not have unprotected sex after you have taken ECPs.
- See your clinician for a pregnancy test if your menstrual period does not start within 3 weeks.

Advantages:

- Can be used to prevent pregnancy after sex has occurred.
- ECPs will not harm a pregnancy or cause a miscarriage.

Possible Problems or Disadvantages:

- No protection against STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- ECPs do not work as well as some other methods of birth control.
- May cause nausea/vomiting, fatigue, headache, abdominal pain, or breast tenderness.
- No protection against pregnancy if unprotected sex happens after ECPs have been taken.


How Well Does It Prevent Pregnancy?

- When no birth control is used, 85 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year.
- If 100 women had unprotected intercourse, about eight would become pregnant; following treatment with ECPs within 72 hours after having sex, only two would become pregnant.
- If 100 women had unprotected intercourse and were treated with progestin-only ECPs within 72 hours after having sex, one woman would probably become pregnant.
- The longer you wait after having sex, the less likely the pills are to prevent pregnancy.



Another EC Option

- Another option is to have a copper-releasing IUD placed in the uterus within 5 days of having unprotected sex. If you are interested in this option, discuss it with your health-care provider.
- With typical use, 1 out of 100 women get pregnant in a year while using the copper-releasing IUD.

DO'S

-  **Do use your method as instructed.**
-  **Do call the clinic if you have problems or questions.**
-  **Do know the date of your last menstrual period.**
-  **Do encourage your partner's participation in choosing and using your method.**
-  **Do protect yourself against STIs and HIV/AIDS.**
-  **Do be responsible when having sex.**
-  **Do call the clinic if you have burning or a discharge or bad smell coming from the penis or vagina.**
-  **Do call the clinic if your penis or vagina itches or has sores.**
-  **Do call the clinic if you miss your menstrual period.**

DON'TS

-  **Don't have sex without using a birth control method (unless you want to be pregnant).**
-  **Don't forget to use your birth control method.**
-  **Don't let your friends choose your method of birth control.**
-  **Don't believe that it is possible to tell if a person has an STI or HIV by looking.**
-  **Don't share your prescription method with a friend.**
-  **Don't wait until you run out of your method before calling the clinic for a refill.**
-  **Don't douche. Douching increases the risk of getting a vaginal infection.**
-  **Don't think you can't get an STI or HIV/AIDS from having unprotected oral or anal sex. You can!**

**For the family planning clinic
nearest you,
visit the
Family Planning Clinic Locator:**

www.dshs.state.tx.us/famplan/locator.shtm



Department of State Health Services
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