

# Choosing Your Birth Control Method

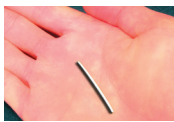

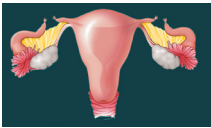






Need no-cost birth control methods and family planning services?









Family PACT is here to help.



- **All these methods are safe for most people to use.** Talk with a Family PACT provider about what method is right for you.
- **Some methods work better than others.** Some methods work very well no matter what. Other methods work well only if you use them the right way every time. The numbers below show how well each method works for most women.

- **Want to protect yourself from HIV and other sexual infections?** Use condoms for men or women every time you have sex. Or decide not to have sex at all.
- **Had sex with no method?** You can still prevent pregnancy. Ask about Emergency Contraceptive Pills.
- **Want to find a Family PACT provider near you?** Go to [www.familypact.org](http://www.familypact.org) and enter your zip code in the box marked “Find Providers.” Or call toll-free 1-800-942-1054.

Birth Control Method	How you use it	How well it works	Pros	Cons	Helpful Tips
<b>Long Term Methods:</b> These methods are the most effective and are safe and easy to use. None of these methods protect against HIV and other sexual infections.					
<b>Implant</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care provider places it under the skin of the woman's arm.</li> <li>• Lasts 3 years.</li> </ul>	Almost 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few side effects.</li> <li>• Once in, there's nothing more to do.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Causes changes in your periods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After 3 years, have it taken out and have a new one put in.</li> </ul>
<b>IUC</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care provider places it in woman's uterus.</li> <li>• There are two kinds.</li> <li>• Lasts 5 or 10 years.</li> </ul>	99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few side effects.</li> <li>• Once in, there's nothing more to do.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can cause some cramping when placed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check the threads once a month.</li> </ul>
<b>Sterilization for Women</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care provider cuts or blocks the woman's tubes through the abdomen or cervix.</li> </ul>	99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not change your sex life.</li> <li>• Permanent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot easily change your mind.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consent must be signed 30 days ahead of time.</li> <li>• Afterwards, you may need to get tested.</li> </ul>
<b>Sterilization for Men</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care provider cuts or blocks the man's tubes.</li> </ul>	99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not change your sex life.</li> <li>• Permanent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot easily change your mind.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consent must be signed 30 days ahead of time.</li> <li>• Afterwards, get a sperm count.</li> </ul>
<b>Hormonal Methods:</b> All of these methods are for women only and are safe for most women to use. They may cause changes in your period, spotting, bleeding between periods, and other side effects. None of these methods will protect you from HIV or other sexual infections.					
<b>Shot</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care provider gives woman a shot every 12 weeks.</li> </ul>	94%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to use.</li> <li>• Light periods or no periods at all.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May have some weight gain.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get a shot every 12 weeks.</li> </ul>
<b>Ring</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care provider prescribes it.</li> <li>• Woman puts a new ring in her vagina once a month.</li> </ul>	91%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must insert and remove the ring.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the ring for three weeks and leave out for one week.</li> </ul>
<b>Patch</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care provider prescribes it.</li> <li>• Woman puts new patch on each week.</li> </ul>	91%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May have a localized skin rash.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change the patch on the same day of the week for 3 weeks in a row.</li> </ul>
<b>Pill</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care provider prescribes it.</li> <li>• Woman takes one pill every day.</li> </ul>	91%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to use.</li> <li>• Prevents cramps and heavy bleeding during periods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must take the pill every day at about the same time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can help you schedule your periods.</li> </ul>
<b>Mini-Pill</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care provider prescribes it.</li> <li>• Woman takes one pill every day.</li> </ul>	91%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to use.</li> <li>• Has progestin only. There's no estrogen.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is very important to take the mini-pill at the same time every day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good choice for women who can't use estrogen.</li> </ul>

Birth Control Method	How you use it	How well it works	Pros	Cons	Helpful Tips
<b>Barrier Methods:</b> You must use these methods every time you have sex. Only condoms for men or women help prevent HIV and other sexual infections. The other barrier methods do not.					
<b>Diaphragm</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman goes to a provider once to be fitted.</li> <li>• She uses it every time she has sex.</li> </ul>	88%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can put it in ahead of time.</li> <li>• Can be used again and again.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes practice to learn how to use it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use it with spermicides.</li> </ul>
<b>Condoms for Men</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Man uses a new condom every time he has sex.</li> </ul>	82%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can buy in a drug store.</li> <li>• Protects you from HIV and other sexual infections.</li> <li>• There are many kinds to choose from.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be allergic to latex.</li> <li>• Can break or slip off.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store your condoms in a cool, dry place.</li> <li>• Use only water-based lubricants.</li> <li>• If you are allergic to latex, you can get condoms made without latex.</li> </ul>
<b>Condoms for Women</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman uses a new condom every time she has sex.</li> </ul>	79%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can buy in a drug store.</li> <li>• Protects you from HIV and other sexual infections.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes practice to learn how to put it in.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take your time putting it in.</li> </ul>
<b>Sponge</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman uses a new sponge every time she has sex.</li> </ul>	76%*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can buy it in a drugstore.</li> <li>• Can put it in ahead of time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard to take out sometimes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have extra sponges on hand.</li> </ul>
<b>Spermicides</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman puts it in her vagina.</li> <li>• She uses it every time she has sex.</li> </ul>	72%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can buy in a drug store.</li> <li>• There are many kinds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be messy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spermicides work best with condoms or another barrier method.</li> </ul>
<b>Cap</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman goes to a provider once to be fitted.</li> <li>• She uses it every time she has sex.</li> </ul>	71%**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can put it in ahead of time.</li> <li>• Can be used again and again.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes practice to learn how to use it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use it with spermicides.</li> </ul>
<b>Information-Based Methods:</b> You and your partner must work together to use these methods. Abstinence can protect you from HIV and other sexual infections, but Fertility Awareness Methods do not.					
<b>Abstinence</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You and your partner decide not to have sex.</li> </ul>	Up to 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can decide not to have sex if you have no other method.</li> <li>• It is free.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May decide to have sex at the last moment and not be protected.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide what you want to do ahead of time.</li> <li>• Talk with your partner about it.</li> </ul>
<b>Fertility Awareness Methods</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn how your body works.</li> <li>• Keep track of your changes.</li> </ul>	76%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good to know about how your body works.</li> <li>• More than one way to do this.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can take time to learn.</li> <li>• Need to abstain or use a barrier method during some parts of the month.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking with your partner about it really helps.</li> </ul>

Effectiveness rates are for typical use according to *Contraceptive Technology, 20th Edition, 2011*.

\* This rate is for women who have had a baby. For women who have not had a baby, the rate is 88%.

\*\* This rate is from the FDA-approved patient insert and is for women who have had a baby. For women who have not had a baby, the rate is 86%.