

Contraception Methods

Method	What's this?	How does it work?	How is it used?	Possible Benefits	Side effects/limitations
Abstinence is 100% effective at preventing pregnancy.	Choosing not to have sexual intercourse.	If an egg and sperm do not meet, a pregnancy does not happen	Couples make a choice not to have sex.	Delays sex until a time when partners are prepared to handle the risks.	None.
Levonorgestrel Intrauterine Devices (LNG IUDs) are 99% effective at preventing pregnancy.	Small t-shaped plastic device that is inserted into the uterus by a health care provider.	Releases a small amount of the hormone progestin to prevent pregnancy. Works by preventing the sperm from fertilizing the egg. May prevent the egg from leaving the ovaries. Makes the cervical mucus thicker to prevent the sperm from meeting the egg.	Inserted into the uterus by a health care provider. It is also removed by a health care provider.	Hormonal IUDs can be used 3-6 years, depending on the type. No daily routine. Nothing needs to be done at time of intercourse.	No sexually transmitted infection/disease (STI/STD) protection. May experience cramping after insertion, irregular bleeding or amenorrhea as well as increased risk of ectopic pregnancy.
Copper T Intrauterine Devices (Copper T IUDs) 99% effective at preventing pregnancy.	Small t-shaped plastic device wrapped in copper inserted into the uterus by a health care provider.	Works by preventing the sperm from fertilizing the egg.	Inserted into the uterus by a health care provider. It is also removed by a health care provider.	The copper T IUD lasts for up to 10 years. No daily routine. Nothing needs to be done at time of intercourse.	No STI/STD protection. May experience cramping after insertion. The Copper T IUD may cause heavier periods, spotting, and/or increased cramping.
Depo-Provera shot is 94% effective at preventing pregnancy.	Injection of progesterone hormone given in the arm/buttocks.	Prevents the ovaries from releasing an egg, thickens cervical fluid, and thins the uterine lining	A woman gets the shot from a health care provider once every 3 months (4 shots per year)	The shot lasts for 3 months. Menstrual bleeding may stop while using the shot.	No STI/STD protection. May cause unpredictable menstrual bleeding, weight changes, mood changes, and headaches. May increase depression for some. A disadvantage of Depo-Provera is that it can potentially cause bone density loss if used long-term. Discuss with your healthcare provider.
Oral Contraceptives "The Pill" 91% effective at preventing pregnancy.	There are two types of oral contraceptives: (1) estrogen/progestin combined; or (2) progestin only. Release hormones into bloodstream.	Works by preventing the sperm from fertilizing the egg by keeping the eggs from leaving the ovaries and making the cervical mucus thicker to prevent the sperm from meeting the egg.	A health care provider must write a prescription for the pills.	Less bleeding and cramping during period. May decrease acne.	No STI/STD protection. May cause nausea, breast tenderness, changes in mood, "spotting" (bleeding between periods).
The Patch is 91% effective at preventing pregnancy.	A sticky patch that releases hormones into the skin, then into the bloodstream.	Works by preventing the sperm from fertilizing the egg by keeping the eggs from leaving the ovaries and making the cervical mucus thicker to prevent the sperm from meeting the egg.	A patch is worn for 1 week at a time for 3 weeks in a row. During the fourth week, no patch is worn. A health care provider must write a prescription for the patch.	Worn for 1 week at a time. Less bleeding and cramping during period. May decrease acne.	No STI/STD protection. May cause nausea, breast tenderness, changes in mood, "spotting" (bleeding between periods).
Male condoms are 87% effective at preventing pregnancy	Male condom: A thin sleeve that fits over the penis and catches sperm.	Male condom: The semen is caught in the closed end of the condom when a male ejaculates.	Male condom: Unroll onto the erect penis. Pinch the tip of the condom so there is a place for the sperm to be captured.	STI/STD protection. Inexpensive, easy to use, can be purchased at grocery stores, drugstores, bodegas. Given out for free at many health centers.	Some people are allergic to latex; if this is the case, people can use a condom made from plastic (polyurethane). Must be put on before sex. Lambskin or natural condoms are not as effective in STI protection.
NuvaRing is 90% effective with typical use.	The ring is a small, flexible piece of plastic that's inserted into the vagina to provide birth control. Contains a combination of estrogen and progesterone. Does not provide protection against STIs.	The ring prevents your ovaries from releasing eggs or prevents sperm from getting to the egg.	Wear for 21 days, remove for 7 days, replace with a new ring.	More regular and lighter periods, fewer menstrual cramps, and less acne. Lower risk of ovary, endometrial (uterus), and colon cancers, pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), noncancerous ovarian cysts, and iron-deficiency anemia.	May cause weight gain, headaches, irregular bleeding, breast tenderness, mood changes, upset stomach, vaginal irritation and discharge, changes in your period, high blood pressure.
Implant is over 99% effective.	Implant contains progestin hormones. It does not provide protection against STIs.	The implant releases progestin, a hormone that keeps ovaries from releasing eggs. Progestin also thickens the mucus inside the body to prevent sperm from reaching eggs.	Available at some clinics. It needs to be inserted into the arm by a healthcare professional. Implant lasts up to 3 years, but can be removed.	Unlikely to affect weight.	My increase acne. Headache may occur for some people. Menstrual may become irregular especially during the first year.

Contraception Methods

Emergency Contraceptives (EC) can take up to six days for pregnancy to occur after sex. Emergency contraception works up to five days after unprotected sex by preventing the egg and the sperm from joining.

Method: Copper-T IUD is **99% effective** at preventing pregnancy if inserted by a doctor within 5 days of unprotected vaginal sex.

What's this? Small t-shaped plastic device wrapped in copper inserted into the uterus by a health care provider.

How does it work? Works by preventing the sperm from fertilizing the egg.

How is it used? Inserted into the uterus by a health care provider. It is also removed by a health care provider.

Possible benefits: Provided EC after if a couple wasn't using contraception with vaginal sex, if they forgot to take a pill/patch, if a condom breaks, or if someone is forced to have unprotected sex. May be left in as regular contraception moving forward.

Side effects/limitations: No STI/STD protection. May experience cramping after insertion. The Copper T IUD may cause heavier periods, spotting, and/or increased cramping.

Method: Ella is **85% effective** at preventing pregnancy if taken within 5 days of unprotected vaginal sex

What's this? Ulipristal acetate pills release hormone into bloodstream.

How does it work? Works by delaying or inhibiting the eggs from leaving the ovaries.

How is it used? Take 1 pill with a prescription from a health care provider.

Possible benefits: Provides EC after if a couple wasn't using contraception with vaginal sex, if they forgot to take a pill/patch, if a condom breaks, or if someone is forced to have unprotected sex.

Side effects/limitations: No STI/STD protection. May experience a period earlier or later than expected, breast tenderness, dizziness, headaches, and nausea or vomiting.

Method: Levonogestrel pills are **89% effective** at preventing pregnancy if one tablet is taken orally as soon as possible within 72 hours after unprotected intercourse. Efficacy is better if the tablet is taken as soon as possible after unprotected intercourse.

What's this? Levonogestrel pills release hormone into bloodstream.

How does it work? Works by delaying or inhibiting the eggs from leaving the ovaries.

How is it used? Take 1 or 2 pills depending on the type. Often available over the counter without a prescription.

Possible benefits: Provides EC after if a couple wasn't using contraception with vaginal sex, if they forgot to take a pill/patch, if a condom breaks, or if someone is forced to have unprotected sex.

Side effects/limitations: No STI/STD protection. Levonogestrel pills may not work as well for women who have a body mass index (BMI) of more than 25. The Copper-T IUD or ella are better EC options for overweight women. May experience a period earlier or later than expected, breast tenderness, dizziness, headaches, and nausea or vomiting.

Who are we?

Established in 2002, Healthy Futures is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting positive youth development. Healthy Futures provides school-based classroom education and assemblies, after-school and summer programs, parent and community programs, and web-based resources designed to empower teens to make and sustain healthy choices.

Our mission is:

To empower adolescents to enjoy their lives, make healthy choices, and further their goals and dreams.



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