NEED's Village Health Guides for delivering family planning information and referrals to local services

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Institute for Reproductive Health Georgetown University

What is Family Planning?

- When the couple discuss and decide together how many children they would like to have and when, so that they can give love, care, attention and education to each of their children
- Planning when and how many children to have is the couple's responsibility, not just of the man or woman alone
- It is important for all couples– to be married, newly married and those with children

How can Family Planning help?

- Healthier mother and children
- Fewer children means more attention, time, and better education for each child
- Saves money and builds *financial security* of family over time

When is pregnancy risky?

- When woman is less than 20 years of age
- When woman is more than 35 years of age
- When pregnancies are too close together (gap of less than 2 years)
- When pregnancy is too soon, within 6 months of a miscarriage or an abortion
- When pregnancies are too many (four and more children)

What is Family Planning?

Family Planning Methods for different Fertility goals

Family Planning goals of individuals and couples may vary and can include:

- delaying the first pregnancy
- healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies/ births
- limiting family size (not having any more children)

There are options for each goal: Efficacy of Family Planning Methods
Most Effective and easiest to useSterilization, IUD (Copper- T) Very Effective but must be carefully usedLAM, Pills, InjectablesEffective but must be carefully used Condoms, SDM (CycleBeads) **For Delaying and Spacing**

- **Pregnancy/Pregnancies:**
  - Pills
  - Condoms
  - LAM
  - Standard Days Method (Mala Chakra)
  - Injectables
  - IUD (long acting)

For Limiting family size:

- Male Sterilization
- Female Sterilization

Efficacy of Family Planning Methods	
Most Effective and easiest to use	Sterilization, IUD (Copper- T)
Very Effective but must be carefully used	LAM, Pills, Injectables
Effective but must be carefully used	Condoms, SDM (CycleBeads)

Only Condoms provides protection from pregnancies, STIs and HIV

Family Planning Methods for different Fertility goals

Factors affecting the choice of Family Planning Method

- How effective is the contraceptive method in preventing a pregnancy?
- Ease of use
- Willingness to tolerate possible side effects of some contraceptive methods
- Cost of the method
- How often will the couple need to visit the health center?

Note:

- Newly married couples should delay the first pregnancy so that they are emotionally, physically and financially independent before extending their family size
- After the birth of a child, a couple should wait for at least 2 years before the next pregnancy

Factors affecting the choice of Family Planning Method

Condom

What it is?

- A thin rubber sheath, which is put over a man's erect penis just before sexual intercourse
- During ejaculation the semen is released in the condom and hence the sperm cannot enter the woman's vagina

How to use?

- Take care not to tear condom when opening package or putting on
- Before intercourse place condom on tip of erect penis with rolled side out
- Unroll condom all the way to base of penis
- After ejaculation hold rim of condom in place, and withdraw penis while it is still hard
- Tie a knot and wrap the used condom. Dispose it - in a dust bin or bury it

Benefits

- No side effects
- Easy to get, easy to use
- Protects from pregnancy & STI and HIV

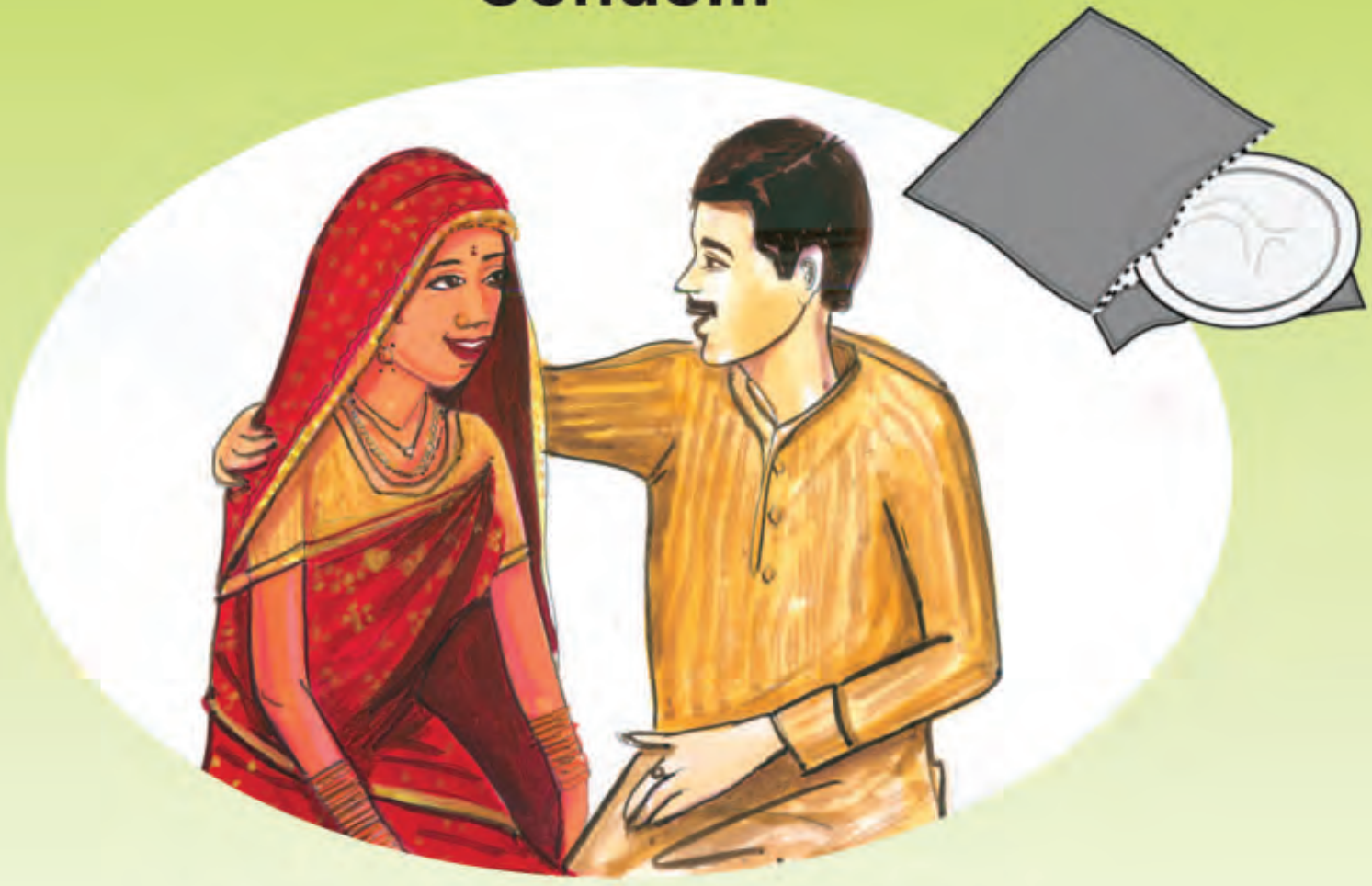
Limitations

- Important to use correctly *every* time couple has sex
- Couples must agree to use
- May reduce sensation (some may feel sex is less enjoyable)

Key Points

- A new condom must be used for every act of sexual intercourse
- Can be used by anyone for protection from pregnancy, STI and HIV, or both
- Condoms must be stored in a cool dry place

Condom



Lactational Amenorrhea Method

What it is?

- Is a natural contraceptive method for post-partum women who are breastfeeding
- It prevents release of egg naturally
- It is effective *only* if its three criteria are fulfilled together:
  1. The woman's monthly periods (menstrual bleeding) has not returned since childbirth
  2. Woman is breastfeeding the baby fully – day and night (giving no additional food or liquids, not even water)
  3. The baby is less than 6 months old

Benefits

- Is very effective till the 3 criteria's are met
- Has no side effects
- Improves baby's nutritional status
- Improves mother and child bonding
- Husband and wife get time to decide what contraceptive method they will use when LAM is no longer effective

Limitations

- Provides short term (up to a maximum of 6 months) protection from pregnancy
- Only effective when all the three criteria are met together
- Is effective only for post- partum women who are breastfeeding
- Does not provides protection from STI and HIV

Key Points:

- The child should be breastfed even if the mother and/or the child is/are unwell
- Breastfeeding should be continued even after 6 months and supplementary food should also be initiated

Remember: When any of the LAM criteria is no longer met, the woman must immediately start using another contraceptive method to prevent a pregnancy. Refer her to a health service provider

Lactational Amenorrhea Method

Standard Days Method

What it is?

Is a simple, effective modern contraceptive method based on the knowledge of the fertile period in a woman's menstrual cycle

- Helps a woman know which days in the menstrual cycle she is most likely to get pregnant (also called as fertile days)
- To prevent a pregnancy the couple agrees to use condoms or abstain from sex on all the fertile days
- A string of color coded beads known as CycleBeads help the woman to use the method correctly

Who can use?

- Woman who get their period a month apart, when they expect it
- Couples who agree to manage fertile days by using a condom or abstaining from sex on all fertile days

Benefits:

- Is natural, has no side effects or health risks
- Effective if used correctly
- Does not require any medical examination to start use
- One time product and does not requires re-supplies

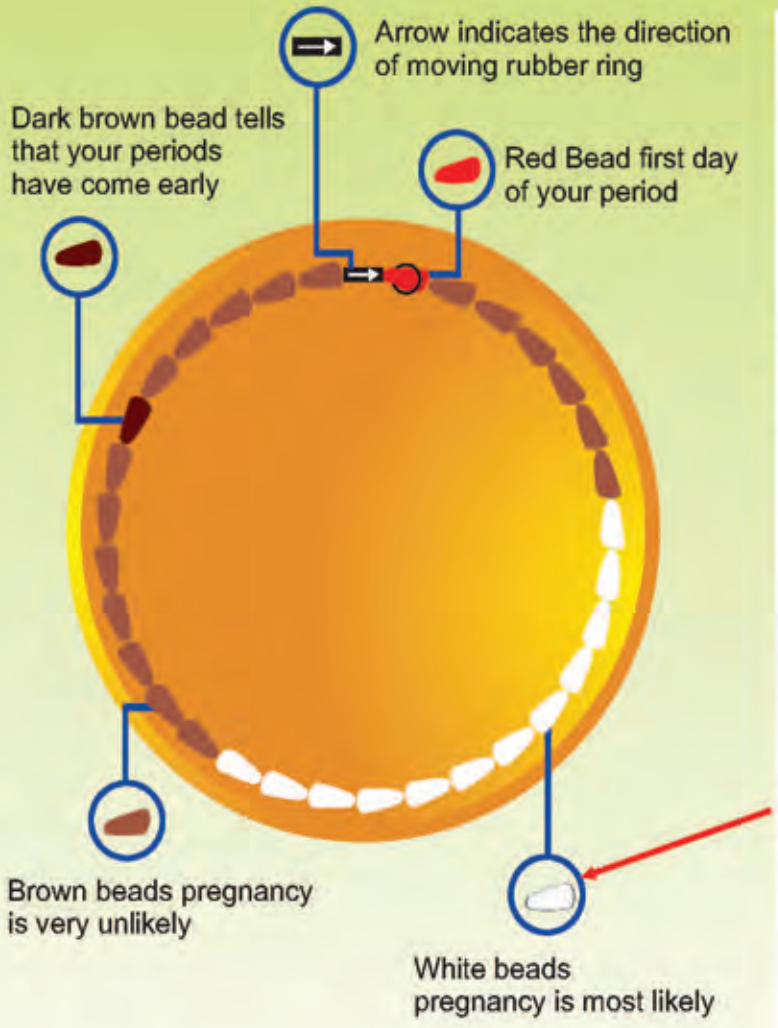
Limitations:

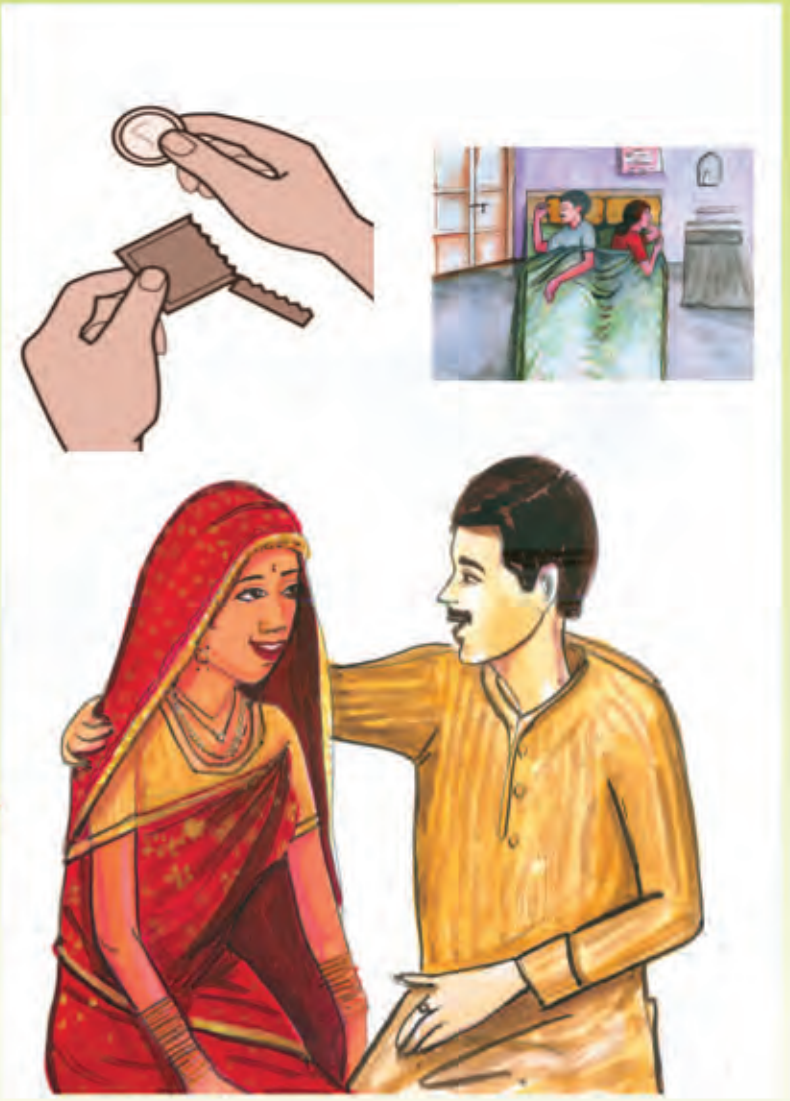
- Women with irregular menstrual cycles, or with long or short cycles or under special circumstances such as those who are breastfeeding cannot use it
- Couples must agree to manage fertile days (use condoms or abstain from sex)
- Does not protects from STIs and HIV

Key Points:

- Advise the woman using SDM to see her health service provider if she has irregular periods , or if her periods come earlier or later, or she has sex on fertile days without using a condom

Standard Days Method





Oral Contraceptive Pills

What it is?

- A pill containing hormones (like natural hormones in woman's body)
- There are 28 pills in a pack – 21 white pills and 7 colored pills
- Protects from pregnancy by inhibiting release of eggs, also blocks sperm from meeting with the egg
- Can be taken for a long time, with quick return of fertility after discontinuation

How to use?

- Take one pill every day. Start from any day between the first to the fifth day of the menstrual cycle, till the packet is finished. Start a new packet from the next day
- If a pill is missed, take the missed pill as soon as you remember and take the next pill at the usual time
- In case 2 or more pills are missed, then use condoms for 7 days and keep taking pills. Contact the health service provider for more information

Benefits:

- Very effective if used correctly
- Safe and easy to start and stop use
- Easy return to fertility when a woman stops taking pills, if she desires a pregnancy
- Make monthly period regular, lighter and less painful
- Prevents anemia
- Protects from certain cancers
- Does not require active participation from the husband

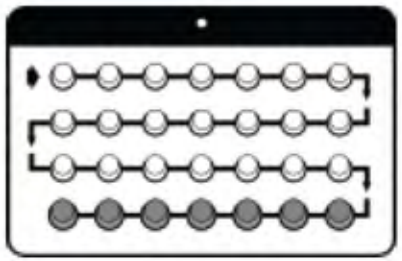
Limitations:

- Requires daily use
- May cause side effects in some women, mostly in the first few months of use
- Less effective if not taken consistently and correctly
- Cannot be used by breastfeeding women (for the first 6 months)
- Provides no protection against STIs and HIV
- Requires resupply

Key Points:

- Refer a client to a health service provider to initiate use and for her to know, who can use pills safely.

Oral Contraceptive Pills



Injectables

What it is?

- Is an injection containing hormones given in the muscles of the upper arm or hip of the woman
- It prevents the release of the egg
- Most widely used Injectable is called DMPA or Depo-Provera

How to use?

- The injection is given once in every 3 months
- Breastfeeding women can start 6 weeks after childbirth
- It is a very effective method if used timely

Benefits

- Safe, very effective
- Easy to use as injection needs to be taken in every 3 months
- Can be discontinued easily if the woman wants
- Does not interfere with sex
- Can also be used by breastfeeding women (after 6 weeks of childbirth)

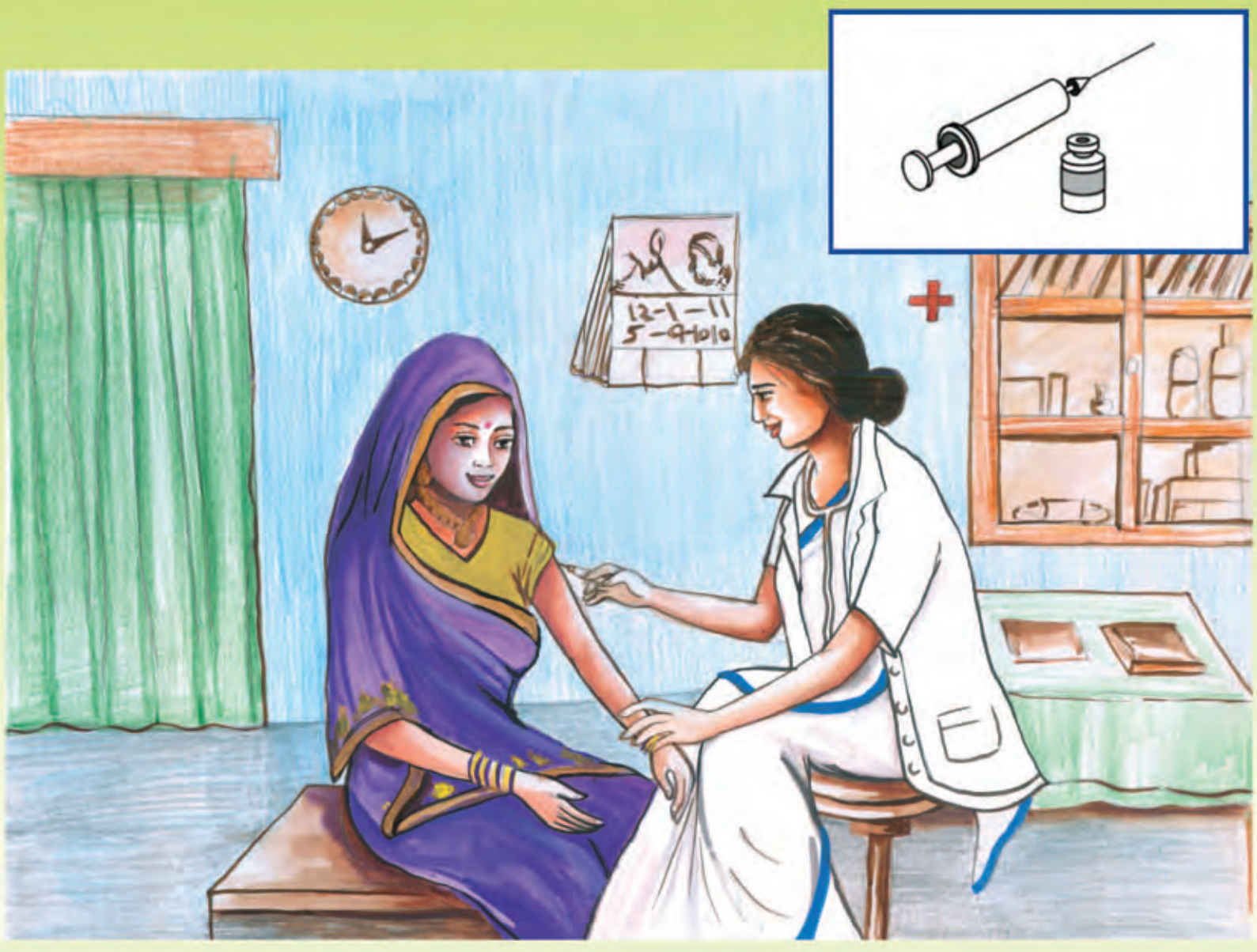
Limitations

- Common side effects, such as irregular bleeding, spotting and amenorrhea may occur
- Return to fertility may take long (few months or longer for some women)
- Provides no protection from STIs and HIV

Key points:

- It does not cause infertility, only periods may stop, which returns after few months of use
- Remember to take the next injection in time (maximum 4 weeks late)

Injectables



Copper- T

What it is?

- Is a small, flexible plastic device shaped as 'T' with copper wire wrapped around it
- It prevents the sperm from meeting the egg. The copper in the Copper-T reduces the mobility of the sperm so they cannot reach the egg
- Is one of the most effective long-acting methods– for 10 years. Whenever the woman wants to get pregnant she can get it removed by a trained health service provider

How to use?

- It is inserted in the uterus by a trained health service provider. The two strings attached to it hang into the vagina
- It can be used safely by many women, even immediately after childbirth

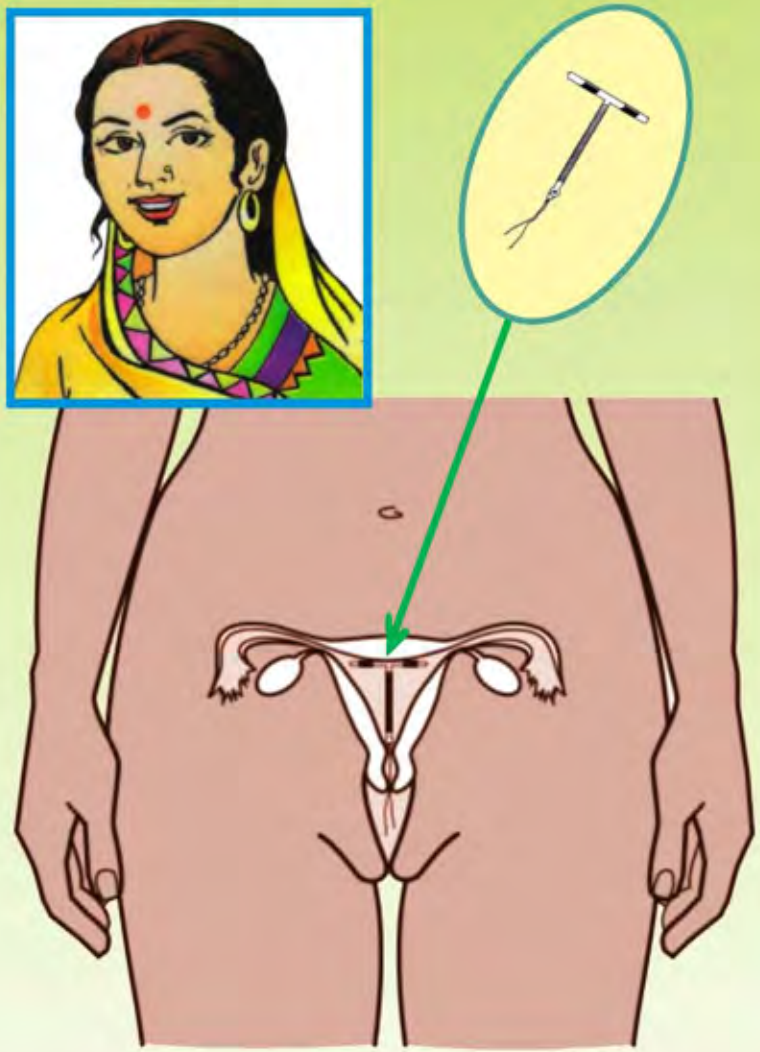
Benefits

- Easy to use and very effective
- Long lasting (can be used for 10 years)
- Does not require any resupply
- Immediate return of fertility after removal
- Has no effect on quality or quantity of breast milk
- Does not interfere with sex

Limitations

- It can be inserted and removed only by a trained health service provider
- It provides no protection from STIs and HIV
- It might cause common side effects as, longer and heavier bleeding and increased cramping of uterus during menses, spotting between periods
- The side effects are not harmful and often diminish or disappear after a few months of use

Copper- T



Sterilization- Female and Male

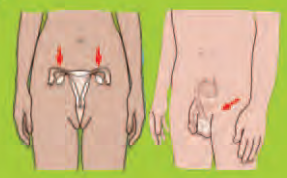
- Is a limiting method for women and men who have achieved their desired family size, and do not want any more children
- It is a simple surgical procedure performed by a trained doctor
- The procedure is available for both men and women
- Is one of the most effective methods for preventing a pregnancy
- Only those couples should opt for sterilization who have decided that their family is complete and they would not want any more children in future

Female Sterilization:

- Both fallopian tubes which carry eggs to the uterus are cut and tied or blocked
- Since the tubes are blocked, the sperm and egg cannot meet and pregnancy cannot occur
- The woman continues to have her menstrual periods as before
- Effective immediately after the procedure is completed
- The woman can go home in a few hours of the procedure
- There may be some soreness for a few day after the procedure but she can resume her daily chores after few days of the procedure when soreness goes away.

Male Sterilization:

- Tubes that carry the sperm from the testicles to the penis are cut and tied by a small puncture in the scrotum
- It is not immediately effective. It takes 3 months for the method to be effective
- The couple must use other contraceptive method during these 3 months
- The procedure does not decrease sex drive or make him weak. He will continue to have erections and ejaculate as before, but there will be no sperm in the semen
- The man can go home in a few hours of the procedure



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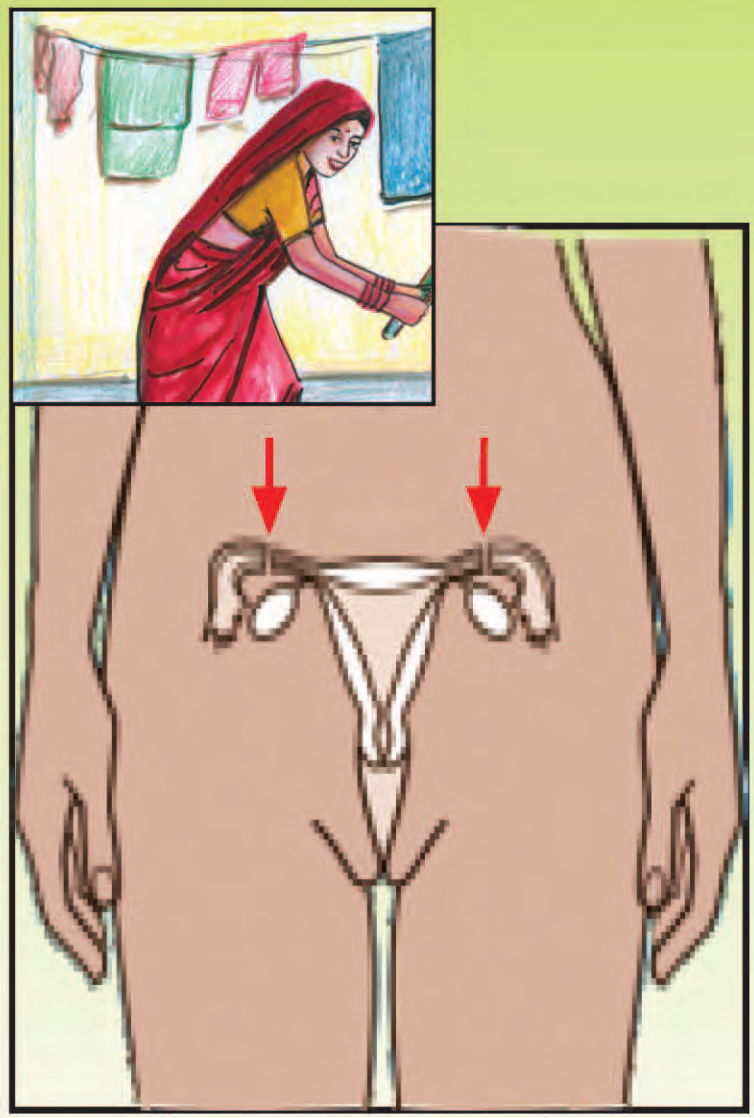
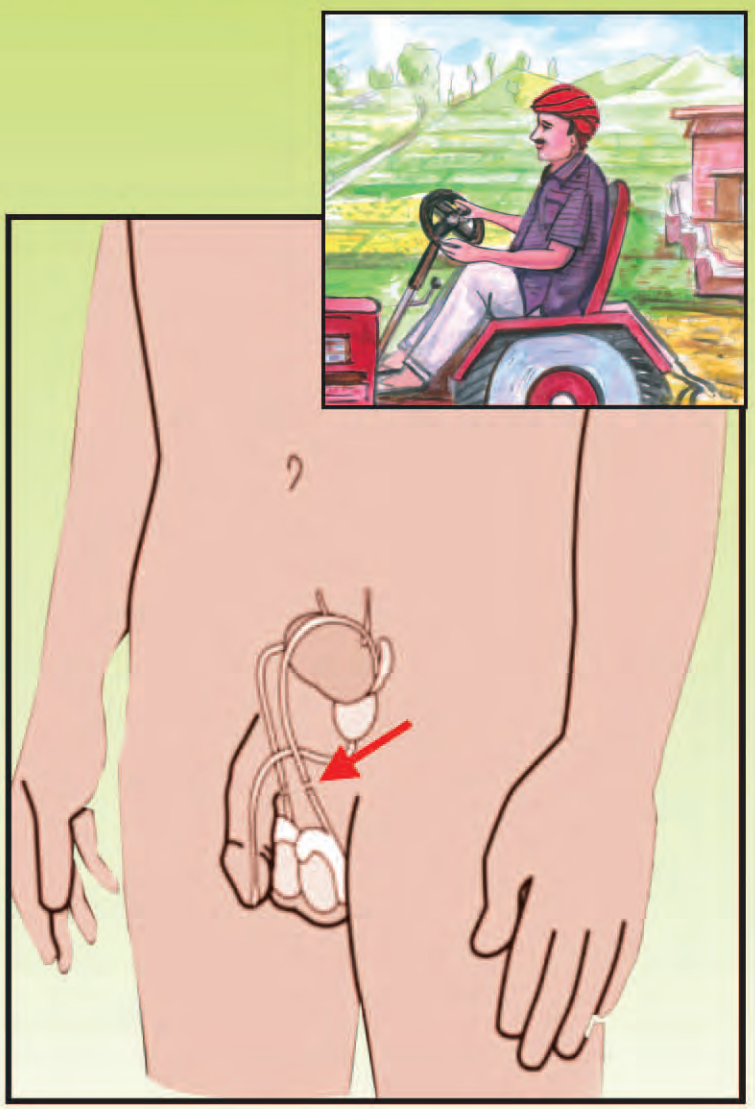




Benefits and Limitations

Benefits

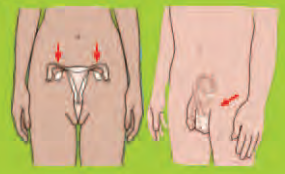
- Safe and simple procedure
- Highly effective in preventing a pregnancy
- No long-term side effects
- No interference with sex or breastfeeding

Limitations

- It is a limiting method and reversing the method may not be possible, so the couple need to be sure that they do not want or desire any more children
- Does not protects from STIs and HIV
- Male sterilization takes 3 months time to become effective, hence the couple must use another contraceptive method during this period

Dispel Myths about Sterilization:

- does not make women or men weak nor decreases their sex drive
- does not involve the removal of a woman's uterus or a man's testicles
- does not cause changes in a woman's menstrual cycle
- does not cause any changes in erections or ejaculation – only the semen contains no sperm
- does not cause any illness later in life



Benefits and Limitations

Discussing Contraceptive Methods with Beneficiaries

Things to Remember:

- Ask the beneficiaries about their family planning goals
  - Do they want to delay a pregnancy, space pregnancies or limit their family size.
- Try to know that whether the beneficiaries have ever used any contraceptive method and how were their experiences
- Give them correct and entire information regarding the contraceptive methods of their choice and according to their family planning goals
- For additional and comprehensive information, please refer the beneficiaries to a health service provider so that they can choose a contraceptive method for themselves and also access services related to contraceptive methods
- If necessary accompany the beneficiary to the health service provider
- Do keep in touch with the beneficiaries and follow them up to know if they are satisfied with the contraceptive method they are using. Answer their queries if they have any

Discussing on contraceptive method- a sensitive topic

- Choose a place that has some privacy so that beneficiaries do not feel shy discussing family planning and contraceptive methods
- Show respect to everyone. There should be no discrimination
- Be empathetic
- Be polite
- Have patience
- Speak clearly, loudly so that everyone can hear
- Use short sentences, and easy language
- Give enough time for discussion, make the discussion interactive and answer their queries and concerns
- Use the flipbook and handout while explaining family planning
- When people ask specific questions about a method, answer their questions based on information you are confident about and the time available, or else fix a one-to-one meeting with that person, or suggest visiting a trained health service provider. If necessary, accompany the beneficiary to the health service provider

Health Service Provider Linkages

Benefits of establishing linkages with health service providers:

- Creating linkages with the health service providers allows one to learn the latest information about when and where family planning services are offered, so that this information can be provided to the men and women in the community
- Linkage with the health service providers helps you to know about the family planning services available within in the community and in nearby areas
- Building relationships with the health service providers sensitizes providers to the health concerns and needs of men and women in the village
- It improves your relationships with the health service providers and It also benefits the men and women of the villages as they are able to get quality services

When to meet the health service provider:

Extend an invitation to the health service provider to be present at group meetings of the SHGs and JLGs, conducted so that they can discuss about family planning methods. Also, she will answer questions/concerns of the beneficiaries and dispel myths about contraceptive methods.

When to refer beneficiaries to a health service provider:

- When the beneficiaries require comprehensive information on contraceptive methods
- When the beneficiaries require services related to family planning.

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