Family Planning Choices?

Your family planning provider can help. Please ask!

Combined Oral Contraceptives

- Effective and reversible without delay.
- Take one pill every day and start new packs on time for greatest effectiveness.
- Unexpected bleeding or spotting may occur, especially at first. Not harmful. Monthly bleeding becomes lighter and more regular after a few months.
- Some women have mild headaches, weight change, upset stomach, especially at first. These often go away.
- Safe for nearly every woman. Serious complications are very rare.
- Can be used at any age and whether or not a woman has had children.
- Help prevent menstrual cramps, heavy bleeding, anemia (low blood iron), and other conditions.

Female Sterilization

- Meant to be permanent. For women who are sure that they will not want more children. Think carefully before deciding.
- Very effective (but not 100% effective).
- Involves physical exam and safe, simple surgery. The woman usually stays awake. Pain is blocked.
- Pain and swelling can last a few days after procedure. Serious complications are rare.
- No long-term side effects. No effect on sexual ability or feelings.

Vasectomy

- Meant to be permanent. For men who are sure that they will not want more children. Think carefully before deciding.
- Use another method for the first 3 months, until the vasectomy starts to work.
- Very effective after 3 months (but not 100% effective).
- Safe, simple, convenient surgery. Done in a few minutes. Pain is blocked.
- Pain, swelling, or bruising can last a few days. A few men have lasting pain.
- No effect on sexual ability or feelings.

Injectable Contraceptives

- Effective and safe.
- One injection every 3 months (13 weeks) with DMPA, every 2 months with NET-EN. Come back as much as 4 weeks late for DMPA, or 2 weeks late for NET-EN, and still get next injection.
- Spotting and unexpected bleeding often occur in the first several months, then often monthly bleeding stops. Gradual weight gain, mild headaches. Not harmful.
- Private. Others cannot tell that a woman is using it.
- Can be used at any age and whether or not a woman has had children.
- When injections stop, a woman can become pregnant again. After DMPA it may take a few more months.
- Safe during breastfeeding, beginning 6 weeks after childbirth.
- Monthly injectables may be available. With these injectables, monthly bleeding usually becomes lighter and shorter or less frequent. Spotting and unexpected bleeding can occur.

LAM (Lactational Amenorrhea Method)

- A family planning method based on breastfeeding, for up to 6 months after childbirth.
- A breastfeeding woman uses LAM when:
  - Her baby gets little or no food or drink except breast milk, and she breastfeeds often, both day and night, and
  - Monthly bleeding has not returned, and
  - Her baby is less than 6 months old.
- A woman should plan for another method before she no longer can use LAM.

Diaphragm With Spermicide

- Placed deep in the vagina each time before sex. Can do this ahead of time.
- Effective if used correctly every time.
- Woman must have an internal examination to get diaphragm of correct size.
- Bladder infection is more common.

Condoms

- Help prevent pregnancy and some sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS, when used correctly every time.
- For protection from STIs/HIV, some couples use condoms along with other methods.
- Easy to use with a little practice.
- Effective if used correctly every time. Usually only somewhat effective because not used every time.
- Some people object that condoms interrupt sex, reduce sensation, or embarrass them. Talking with partner can help.

Contraceptive Implants

- One or several small rods or capsules placed under the skin of a woman's upper arm. Little to do once implants are in place.
- Very effective up to 3, 5, or 7 years, depending on which implant.
- Can be used at any age and whether or not a woman has had children.
- A woman can have a trained provider take out the implants at any time. Then she can become pregnant with no delay.
- Unexpected light bleeding or spotting may occur, or monthly bleeding may stop. Not harmful.
- Safe during breastfeeding, beginning 6 weeks after childbirth.

Fertility Awareness Methods

- A woman learns to tell the fertile time of her monthly cycle.
- During the fertile time a couple avoids vaginal sex, or they use another method such as condoms.
- Can be effective if used correctly. Usually only somewhat effective, however.
- Usually, partners must cooperate closely.
- No physical side effects.
- Certain methods may be hard to use during fever or vaginal infection, after childbirth, or while breastfeeding.

Copper-Bearing IUD (Intrauterine Device)

- Small, flexible device placed inside the womb. Little to do once IUD is in place.
- Very effective, reversible, long-term method. TCu-380A IUD is effective at least 12 years.
- Monthly bleeding may be heavier and longer, especially at first. Some pain during insertion.
- Pelvic infection occasionally occurs if a woman has certain sexually transmitted infections when the IUD is inserted. Serious complications are rare.
- Can come out on its own, especially at first.
- A woman can become pregnant with no delay after the IUD is removed.

Progestin-Only Oral Contraceptives

- Good choice for breastfeeding mothers who want pills, beginning 6 weeks after childbirth.
- Very effective during breastfeeding and reversible without delay.
- Take one pill every day for greatest effectiveness.
- If not breastfeeding, spotting and unexpected light bleeding are common. Not harmful.

Emergency Contraceptive Pills help prevent pregnancy when taken within 5 days after unprotected sex or a mistake with a family planning method. Safe for all women. They do not disrupt pregnancy or harm the baby if a woman is already pregnant.

For more information about these family planning methods, health care providers can consult *Family Planning: A Global Handbook for Providers*. Health care providers can obtain the handbook and more copies of this wall chart from the INFO Project, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs, 111 Market Place, Suite 310, Baltimore, Maryland 21202, USA; email orders@jhuccp.org. This chart updates and replaces previously published editions. This wall chart was made possible by support from the United States Agency for International Development, Global, GH/PRH/PEC, under the terms of Grant No. GPH–A–00–02–00003–00. © 2007 Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs

Some Methods Are Not Advised If You Have Certain Health Conditions

Condition	Methods Not Advised
Smoke cigarettes and also age 35 or older	Combined oral contraceptive pills (COCs). If you smoke heavily, monthly injectables.
Known high blood pressure	COCs, monthly injectables. If severe high blood pressure, 2- and 3-month injectables.
Fully or nearly fully breastfeeding in first 6 months	COCs, monthly injectables.
Breastfeeding in first 6 weeks	2- and 3-month injectables, implants, progestin-only pills (POPs).
First 21 days after childbirth, not breastfeeding	COCs, monthly injectables. Wait until 6 weeks after childbirth to fit diaphragm correctly.
Certain uncommon serious diseases of the heart, blood vessels, or liver, or breast cancer	COCs, injectables, POPs, implants. Ask your provider.
Migraine headaches (a type of severe headache) and also age 35 or older	COCs, monthly injectables. Ask your provider.
Migraine aura (sometimes see a growing bright spot in one eye), at any age	COCs, monthly injectables. Ask your provider.
Gall bladder disease	COCs. Ask your provider.
Certain uncommon conditions of female organs	IUD. Ask your provider.
Sexually transmitted infections of the cervix, very high individual risk of getting these infections, pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), or untreated AIDS	IUD. Use condoms even if also using another method. Women with HIV, including women with AIDS and those on treatment, can generally use any family planning method they choose. (This includes the IUD for a woman with actual AIDS, but only if

Comparing Effectiveness of Family Planning Methods

More effective
Less than 1 pregnancy per 100 women in one year

Less effective
About 30 pregnancies per

How to make your method more effective

Implants, IUD, female sterilization: After procedure, little or nothing to do or remember

Vasectomy: Use another method for first 3 months

Injectables: Get repeat injections on time

Lactational Amenorrhea Method (for 6 months): Breastfeed often, day and night

Pills: Take a pill each day

Patch, ring: Keep in place, change on time

Condoms, diaphragm: Use correctly every time you have sex

Fertility awareness methods: Abstain or use condoms on fertile days. Newest methods (Standard Days Method and TwoDay Method) may be easier to use.

Withdrawal, spermicides: Use correctly every time you have sex