

What are you doing about birth control?

Start a method today.

Choosing a method: *What matters most to me?*

Cost

Varies, but all methods are less costly than pregnancy.

Privacy

How private does my method need to be?

I'm Breastfeeding

I need a method that is safe for breastfeeding.

Effectiveness

How well does it prevent pregnancy?

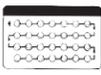
Convenience

How often do I need to think about it?

Other Benefits

Many methods reduce bleeding/cramping.

Birth Control Options: *Choose a method*

	Method Type	What is it? How does it work?	Strong Points	What have you heard? Here are the facts:	Other Considerations	
MOST EFFECTIVE	Intrauterine Device 	Levonorgestrel IUS (Mirena) What: Small, plastic device that sits inside the uterus. How: It prevents male sperm from reaching the female egg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very effective, safe, and forgettable. Works for 5 years but can remove anytime. Also treats heavy and painful menstrual bleeding. Often makes periods very light or go away altogether (after 2 years of use, 7 out of 10 women will have lighter or no periods.) Safe to use after having a baby and when breastfeeding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUDs are safe for women of all ages and women who have not had children. IUDs are often the preferred method for women with medical conditions (like high blood pressure). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect spotting and irregular bleeding during the first 3-6 months of use. Having no periods (or very light periods) is an expected benefit of this method and not a cause for concern; the progestin in the IUD keeps the lining of the uterus very thin. 	
		Copper T IUD (ParaGard)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very effective, safe, and forgettable. Contains no hormones at all. Use for 10 years but can remove anytime. Safe to use after having a baby and when breastfeeding. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some women may have heavier periods with the Copper IUD, especially in the first year: this usually improves with time. 	
	Arm Implant 	Implanon What: Small, plastic rod that is inserted under the skin. How: The hormone progestin inside the implant prevents an egg from being released.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very effective, safe, and forgettable. Use for 3 years but can remove anytime. Easy for a trained provider to insert; pelvic exam not needed. Safe to use after having a baby and when breastfeeding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implant is safe for almost all women to use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some women have irregular and frequent bleeding; some women have no bleeding at all. 	
	Sterilization	Female <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tubal Ligation Hysteroscopic Male <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vasectomy What: The tubes are permanently and surgically closed. How: Male sperm cannot reach the female egg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent method for women/men who no longer want to have children. Tubal ligation can be done with c-section or soon after having a baby. Hysteroscopic methods are done through the uterus. Male vasectomy can be done in the office with local anesthesia. Safe after having a baby and when breastfeeding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sterilization is a permanent method and not reversible. Male vasectomy does not change sexual performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surgical procedure is required; check with your clinic to connect with a trained provider. May regret the decision to be permanently sterilized; if young or not in a long term relationship should strongly consider an alternative, reversible method. 	
VERY EFFECTIVE	Progestin Injection 	Depo-Provera What: An injection every 3 months. How: The progestin hormone in the shot prevents an egg from being released.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No pills, no trips to the pharmacy; instead, go to your provider every 3 months for an injection. May stop your periods after 6-9 months of continued use; this is safe and expected. Can also be used to treat heavy, irregular, unwanted bleeding. Safe to use after having a baby and when breastfeeding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very safe. Almost all women can safely use this method. Very effective. Very few pregnancies when injections every 3 months. Safe to use for longer than 2 years if it is the best choice for you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irregular bleeding is common and expected in the first 6 months; with continued use, you are very likely to have no bleeding or periods. Need to visit your health clinic every 3 months for an injection. Some women will have an increased appetite when they use Depo and may gain weight. Weight gain can be managed with diet and exercise, but you may also want to consider another method if you are gaining too much weight while on Depo. 	
	Methods with Estrogen and Progestin	Pills 	a pill; take each day What: These methods (pills, patch, ring) deliver the hormones estrogen and progestin to your body. How: These are the same hormones that women make naturally but when they are given in constant dose, the ovary does not produce an egg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will lessen bleeding and cramping, make periods more regular. Can improve acne and decrease PMS. Can be used for menstrual suppression (extend periods to every few months or have no scheduled bleeding). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are safe for almost all women. Do not cause weight gain. Do not make it harder to get pregnant later on. Do not cause miscarriage. Do not cause breast cancer (and actually reduce the risk of ovarian and uterine cancer). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require that you get refills every 1-3 months. (Some insurance companies will only dispense a 1 month supply.) Consider if this will be easy for you to do. Vary in cost depending on your insurance coverage - check with your pharmacy. Only brand names of the patch and ring are available at this time. For pills, check your pharmacy's low cost drug list and request that your provider prescribe one of these pills. Common side effects include irregular spotting and bleeding, sore breasts, and mild stomach upset. These may occur in the first 1-3 months of use. Keep taking the method and symptoms will improve with time.
		Patch 	a skin patch; change each week			
Ring 		a vaginal ring; change each month				
EFFECTIVE	Progestin-Only Pills	What: A pill that contains the hormone progestin. How: Progestin causes the cervical mucus to thicken and blocks sperm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe to use after having a baby and when breastfeeding. 		Need to take a pill every day; consider another method if you forget pills. Use condoms (or don't have sex) if you miss a pill.	
	Condoms 	Male Condoms (Latex and Polyurethane) What: A plastic cover that catches sperm and prevents genital skin contact. How: The sperm stay in the condom and do not get inside a woman's vagina.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only method that prevents sexually transmitted infections/HIV Over The Counter (OTC): anyone can buy condoms at the pharmacy, grocery store, or wherever sold. Can also be used to prevent infection during oral and anal sex. Safe to use after having a baby and when breastfeeding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asking your partner to use a condom does not mean that you mistrust them or are "easy." Condoms protect your health and the health of your partner. Condoms are very good at preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections when they are used correctly and with every sexual encounter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some couples only use condoms right before ejaculation; to be effective at preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, a condom needs to be covering the penis anytime it is near or inside a woman's vagina. Some men and women may not want to use condoms because it doesn't feel romantic, or "it doesn't feel good"; try different condoms (textures, sizes) and use lubrication. Some couples find it really hard to talk about sex and condoms; get help from your health provider, counselor, or trusted friend. 	
LEAST EFFECTIVE	Other Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breastfeeding as birth control may be effective in preventing pregnancy if: breastfeeding exclusively; day and night feedings; no menses since delivery; the baby is less than 3-6 months old. Fertility Awareness (Natural Family Planning): 25% failure rate. Sponge: 16% (nulliparous) and 32% (parous) failure rate. Diaphragm: 16% failure rate. Withdrawal: 27% failure rate. Spermicide: 29% failure rate. 	May be best option for some women.		High failure rate (over 1 out of every 4 women will get pregnant during 1 year of use).	