

# CONTRACEPTION

**You have lots of options**

**The facts inside can help you make the best choice for you.**





# CONTRACEPTION

**Also called birth control, contraception allows you to enjoy sex while reducing your risk of pregnancy.**



**Contraception is a safe and effective way to prevent pregnancy, but it doesn't protect you against STIs. Use a condom along with your contraception to protect yourself and your partner(s).**



# Hormonal vs Non-Hormonal Contraception

## Hormonal

Hormonal birth control options use estrogen &/or progestin to prevent ovulation, thicken cervical mucus and change the uterine lining



LNG-IUS  
IUD



Pill



Injection



Patch



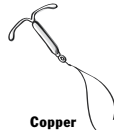
Ring

## Non-Hormonal

Non-hormonal birth control is a barrier that prevents the sperm from reaching the egg.



Condom



Copper  
IUD

**Contraception is very safe for most people.**

Some health conditions can increase the risk of serious side effects. Check with your health care provider before taking contraception if you are a smoker over 35 years old or if you have an existing health condition.

**Some side effects of contraception can be a warning sign of something more serious. If you have any of the following symptoms, you should let your health care provider know as soon as possible:**

A new lump in your breast, severe or worsening depression, severe chest or stomach pain, severe headache (sometimes with aura - seeing spots of bright light), unexplained fever, chills or trouble breathing, soreness in your leg, severe redness, vaginal bleeding that is much heavier or for much longer than normal, missing a period if you have always been regular, pain or bleeding during sex, abnormal vaginal discharge, yellow eyes, swelling or pus at the injection site (for Depo Provera), string is shorter or longer than before (for IUD).



# All contraception options

listed in this booklet are effective in preventing pregnancy.

Based on your body and your lifestyle, some types may be a better fit for you than others. Its important that your contraception method is right for you.



IUD



Ring



Patch



Pill



Injection



Condom



## Here are some questions to think about when deciding between your contraception options.

### **Can I remember to take contraception every day, week or month?**

There are contraception options to fit every lifestyle, from a pill taken daily to an IUD that lasts for years. It's important that you choose a method that will work for your regular schedule.

### **Am I comfortable taking a pill, or using a patch, ring or injection?**

It's important that your contraception option is a good fit for you and your lifestyle.

### **How effective will the options be for me?**

When used perfectly, all contraception options are very effective in preventing pregnancy. Contraception failure usually results from forgetting to take it on time.

### **How will I protect myself and my partner from STIs?**

Condoms are the only contraception that also protects against STIs. They can be used along with other contraception options for extra protection.

### **Do I plan on getting pregnant in the future?**

Some methods are longer lasting than others, and some are permanent. Your plans to become pregnant in the future (or not), may affect your choice of contraception.


### **Do I have any health factors that prevent me from using some types of contraception?**

Some health conditions (such as smoking) can increase the risk of side effects. Ask your health care provider about possible interactions with your current medications or health conditions.

### **What's my Plan B?**

No one is perfect and mistakes using contraception happen. Make sure you know what to do if you miss taking your contraception on time.

# The Pill



**The contraceptive pill contains hormones (estrogen and progestin or progestin only) that prevent pregnancy.** You can start the pill at any time. Depending on which day in your menstrual cycle you start, and on which pill you choose, it can take up to 7 days before the pill is effective in preventing pregnancy.

You'll need to use **condoms** until the pill has been in your body long enough to prevent pregnancy.



**You need to take the pill at the same time every day**

When taken perfectly, the pill can be 99.7% effective, but most people aren't perfect. With typical use, it's about

How  
Effective?

# 91% Effective

Meaning 90 out of 1000 people will get pregnant in a year.



**Forgetting to take the pill on time every day is the most common reason the contraception pill fails, resulting in an unplanned pregnancy.**

**Some side effects from the pill are more desirable than others. Many of the less desirable ones often get better after you have been on the pill for a few months.** Side effects can include: more regular periods, less menstrual flow and cramping, less acne, reduced risk of endometrial and ovarian cancer, higher risk of bone density loss, irregular bleeding, headaches, bloating, breast tenderness, nausea (it can help to take the pill at bedtime), higher risk of blood clots.

# Depo Provera



(Injectable Contraceptive or The Shot)

Depo Provera is an injection containing the hormone progestin that prevents pregnancy. It is given in the muscle of your upper arm or the cheek of your bum every 12 weeks. You will have to see a health care provider every three months for your injection, but there is nothing to remember every day.

You can start on Depo Provera any time. If your first injection is given during in the first five days of your menstrual period, Depo Provera is effective immediately.

If your first injection is given at another time in your **menstrual** cycle, you'll need to use **condoms** for 3 weeks until the injection has been in your system long enough to prevent pregnancy. Your health care provider may ask you to take a pregnancy test before you start on Depo Provera.



**Depo Provera shots are given every 12 weeks**



When used perfectly, Depo Provera can be 99.8% effective, but most people aren't perfect. With typical use, it's about

How Effective?

94% Effective

Meaning 60 out of 1000 people will get pregnant in a year.



**Forgetting to get your injection on time is the most common reason Depo Provera fails, resulting in an unplanned pregnancy.**

**Depo Provera is only effective at preventing pregnancy for three months (12-13 weeks), but the side effects of the medication may continue for longer. Some side effects from Depo Provera are more desirable than others. Many of the less desirable ones often get better after you have been on Depo Provera for a few months.** Side effects can include: changes to your menstrual periods (often menstrual cramps are reduced and periods become lighter or stop all together. This is not harmful. Some women experience longer periods or irregular periods.), irregular ovulation for 6-8 months after their last injection (this can mean a delay in being able to get pregnant after you stop taking Depo Provera.), reduced risk of endometrial cancer and fibromas, higher risk of bone density loss, acne, headaches, breast tenderness, worsening of depression, change in sex drive, change in appetite, weight gain.

# Vaginal Ring



**The vaginal ring is a small, soft, flexible, clear plastic ring you insert into your vagina.** You leave it in your vagina (held in place by your vaginal walls) for three weeks at a time, while the ring slowly releases two types of **hormones** (estrogen and progestin). After one ring-free week (when you will get your menstrual period), you insert a new ring to start a new cycle.

**Most people find the ring easy to insert, and can't feel it once it is in place. You can have sex with the ring in place. If you decide to take the ring out at any time during the three weeks, you must put it back in within three hours for it to keep preventing pregnancy.**

You can start using the vaginal ring at any time. Depending on which day in your cycle you start, it can take up to 7 days before the vaginal ring is effective in preventing pregnancy.

You'll need to use condoms until the ring has been in place long enough for it to prevent pregnancy.



**You need to change your vaginal ring monthly**

When used perfectly, the ring can be 99.7% effective, but most people aren't perfect. With typical use, it's about

How  
Effective?

# 91% Effective

Meaning 90 out of 1000 people will get pregnant in a year.



**For most people, forgetting to change their ring on time every week is the most common reason why the ring fails, resulting in an unplanned pregnancy.**

**Some side effects from the vaginal ring are more desirable than others. Many of the less desirable ones often get better after you have been using the vaginal ring for a few months.** Side effects can include: more regular periods, less menstrual flow and cramping, reduced risk of endometrial, ovarian, cervical and colon cancer, reduced risk of fibroids and ovarian cysts, irregular bleeding, headaches, breast tenderness, nausea, vaginal irritation or discharge, decreased sexual drive.

# Condoms

## TYPES OF BARRIERS



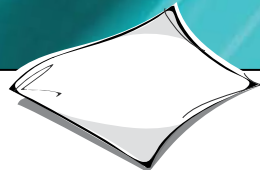
### External Condom

covers the penis during sex.




### Internal Condom

is worn inside the vagina or anus during sex.



### Dental dam

is a thin square of latex placed over the vulva or anus during oral sex.



Condoms are barriers that prevent **pregnancy** by stopping the sperm from reaching the egg. Condoms also protect you from **Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)** by preventing contact with skin and fluids that spread the infections. So, even if you're using another form of **contraception** to prevent pregnancy, it's still important to use condoms every time you have sex to protect yourself and your partner(s) from STIs.



**Use a new condom every time you have sex**

If used perfectly every time you have vaginal, oral or anal sex, condoms can be very effective in protecting against pregnancy and STIs. But, most people aren't perfect.

**How Effective?**

**With normal use, condoms are**  
**85% Effective**

Meaning 90 out of 1000 people will get pregnant in a year.

- every time you have vaginal, anal or oral sex,
- if you are switching from one type of sex to another,
- with each partner, and
- with shared sex toys.

- Condoms should go on an erect penis before any sexual contact.
- Never use more than one condom at the same time.
- Condoms come in different sizes. Too big, and it may fall off or leak, too small and it may break.
- Store condoms in a cool dry place, and out of direct sunlight.
- Only use water or silicone based lubricants with condoms. Oil-based lubricants (like baby oil or coconut oil, or lotion) can damage condoms and cause them to break.

To find out more about how to use condoms and where to get FREE condoms, visit:

**SEX**LIFE **SASK.CA**

To protect yourself and your partner(s) from pregnancy and STIs  
**Use a new condom:**



## Emergency Contraception Pill

Most effective when taken within 24 hours, but can be taken up to five days after unprotected sex.



## Pill & Mini Pill

91% effective in preventing pregnancy  
You must take the pill every day.



## Depo Provera

94% effective in preventing pregnancy  
You must get your injection every 12 weeks.



## Patch

91% effective in preventing pregnancy  
You must change your patch every week.



## Ring

91% effective in preventing pregnancy  
You must change your ring every month.



## IUD

99.8% effective in preventing pregnancy  
Once inserted, it lasts 3-10 years.



## Male or Female Condom

85% effective in preventing pregnancy - You must use a condom correctly every time you have sex.

Copper IUD (CU-IUD) must be inserted within 7 days of unprotected sex.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Prevents ovulation (Pill)</li> <li>✓ Thins uterine lining (Pill)</li> <li>✓ Prevents sperm from reaching the egg (IUD)</li> </ul>
Contains estrogen & progestin or progestin only	<div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Prevents ovulation</li> <li>✓ Thickens cervical mucous</li> <li>✓ Thins uterine lining</li> </ul> </div>
Contains progestin	
Contains estrogen & progestin	
Contains estrogen & progestin	
Copper IUD (Cu-IUD), contains no hormones.	✓ Prevents sperm from reaching the egg.
Levonorgestrel-releasing IUD (LNG-IUS), contains progestin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Prevents ovulation</li> <li>✓ Thickens cervical mucous</li> </ul>
Contains no hormones.	✓ Prevents sperm from reaching the egg.

# Contraceptive Patch



**The patch is a small beige square that sticks to the skin.** You stick a new patch on your skin each week for three weeks in a row (changing your patch on the same day each week). The patch slowly releases two types of **hormones** through your skin (estrogen and progestin). After one patch-free week (when you will get your period), you stick a new patch to your skin to begin a new cycle.

You can start using the patch at any time. Depending on which day in your **menstrual cycle** you start, it can take up to 7 days before the patch is effective in preventing pregnancy. You'll need to use **condoms** until you the patch has been in place long enough for it to prevent pregnancy.



**You need to change your patch weekly**



## How Effective?

When used perfectly, the patch can be 99.7% effective, but most people aren't perfect. With typical use, it's about

# 91% Effective

Meaning 90 out of 1000 people will get pregnant in a year.



**For most people, forgetting to change their patch on time every week is the most common reason why the patch fails, resulting in an unplanned pregnancy.**

**Some side effects from the patch are more desirable than others. Many of the less desirable ones often get better after you have been on the patch for a few months.** Side effects can include: more regular periods, less menstrual flow and cramping, reduced risk of endometrial, ovarian cancer and cervical cancer, reduced risk of fibroids and ovarian cysts, irregular bleeding, headaches, breast tenderness, nausea, skin irritation.

# Intrauterine Device (IUD)



**AN IUD is a small t-shaped device inserted into the uterus by a health care provider.**

There are two types of IUD. The Copper intrauterine device (Cu-IUD) which does not contain hormones, and the levonorgestrel-releasing intrauterine system (LNG-IUS), which contains the hormone progestin. Either kind of IUD can be used by people who can't take estrogen.



**IUD lasts for 3-12 years**

(depending on the brand)

**An IUD is one of the most effective types of birth control because there is nothing to remember daily, weekly or monthly.**

**How Effective?**

**99.8% Effective**

Meaning 2 out of 1000 people will get pregnant in a year.



**Once your IUD is in place, it will prevent pregnancy for 3-12 years (depending on the brand you choose). It is not permanent. If you decide you want to become pregnant, your health care provider can easily remove your IUD.**

Some side effects of the IUD are more desirable than others. Many of the less desirable ones often get better after your IUD has been in place for a few months. Side effects can include: changes to menstrual periods (periods become irregular, lighter, or stop all together), spotting, and increased menstrual cramps. Some people feel discomfort when their IUD is inserted and cramping or backaches for a few days later.

# Emergency Contraception (EC)



**Emergency Contraception prevents pregnancy after unprotected vaginal sex.** The sooner after unprotected sex EC is used, the more effective it will be.

## **Emergency contraception might be a good option if:**

- You missed your contraception pill, patch, ring, or injection
- You didn't use any contraception
- The condom broke
- You experienced a sexual assault



**Timeliness is critical when using emergency contraception**



## The Emergency Contraceptive Pill

works by preventing ovulation, preventing sperm from fertilizing the egg or stopping the egg from implanting in the uterine wall.



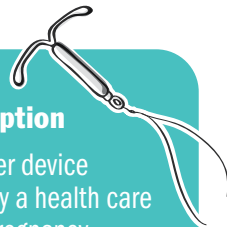
ECP will not harm you or the fetus if you are already pregnant. It is meant to be used occasionally, not as routine contraception. It can be taken up to five days after unprotected sex, but effectiveness declines the later it is taken. A BMI (body mass index) over 25 may reduce the effectiveness of ECP.



**ECP is most effective at preventing pregnancy when taken within**  
**within 24 hours**  
**of unprotected vaginal sex.**

## The Copper IUD as Emergency Contraception

is a small T-shaped copper device inserted into the uterus by a health care professional to prevent pregnancy.



In addition to being a regular form of contraception, Copper IUD is also the most effective form of emergency contraception when inserted within 7 days of unprotected vaginal sex.



**Copper IUD is most effective at preventing pregnancy when inserted within**  
**within 7 days**  
**of unprotected vaginal sex.**

# Contraception after pregnancy



It is possible to become pregnant soon after you have been pregnant. If you are breastfeeding, you could begin ovulating as early as four weeks after childbirth. If you aren't breastfeeding, ovulation could start even sooner (even before your menstrual cycle returns).

## Combination Contraception *(contain both progestin and estrogen)*

In the first few weeks after pregnancy, estrogen can increase your risk of blood clots and reduce your breast milk supply. Combination contraception should not be started until 4 weeks after delivery to allow time for your blood clotting to return to normal and for breastfeeding to establish. Additional time may be needed if you have a history of a blood clotting disorder or you have a reduced breast milk supply. Hormones from combined contraception in your breast milk will not harm your baby.

Combination Contraception can be started immediately after miscarriage or termination (abortion)



The Vaginal Ring

The Patch

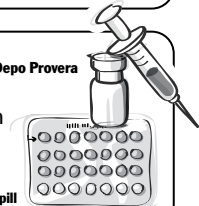


Combination Oral Contraceptive Pill

## Progestin only Contraception *(contain only progestin)*

Progestin only contraception can be started immediately after childbirth, miscarriage or termination (abortion). In most cases, progestin-only contraception does not interfere with breast milk supply. Hormones from progestin-only contraception in your breast milk will not harm your baby.

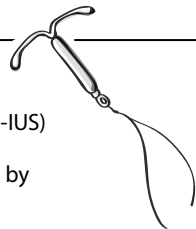
Depo Provera



Progestin-only mini pill

## IUD

The **Copper IUD** contains no hormones while the **Levonorgestrel-releasing IUD** (LNG-IUS) contains progestin. Either IUD can be inserted at the time of childbirth, miscarriage or termination (abortion) or more than six weeks after childbirth, miscarriage or termination by your health care provider. The IUD does not interfere with breastfeeding.



## Condoms

**Condoms** contain no hormones and can be used any time after childbirth, miscarriage or termination (abortion). In addition to preventing pregnancy, condoms also prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).



## Emergency Contraception

**Emergency Contraception pill (ECP)** can be safely used if you are breastfeeding. In most cases, ECP will not affect your breast milk supply, and if it does, your supply should return to normal within a couple of days. ECP is meant to be used occasionally, not as routine contraception and is most effective when taken within 24 hours of unprotected vaginal sex. It can be taken up to five days after unprotected vaginal sex, but effectiveness declines the later it is taken.



**Copper IUD** is the most effective form of emergency contraception when inserted within 7 days of unprotected vaginal sex. The copper IUD does not interfere with breastfeeding and can be left in place as your regular form of contraception.



**It's important that your contraception method is right for you.**

**If you're having trouble remembering your contraception, or you're struggling with side effects, there are lots of great options that might be a better fit for you.**

For more information about contraception or other areas of your sexual health, explore...

 **LIFE SASK.CA**