

Birth Control Comparison Chart

HORMONAL METHODS

Emergency Contraception Morning After Pill	The Pill Oral Contraceptive	The Patch	Vaginal Ring	The Shot: Depo Provera or DMPA	Implanon Implant
<p>How often: Daily</p> <p>Effectiveness: 92% - 99.7%</p> <p>What is it? Emergency Contraception Pills prevent pregnancy after sex. Also called Morning After Pill. Brand name is Plan B. Contains a short burst of a high dose of the hormones in birth control pills.”</p> <p>How it works: Decreases chance of ovulation, affects the lining of uterus, thickens cervical mucus to stop sperm from entering the uterus, prevents fertilization.</p> <p>How to use: Swallow pills as soon as possible. May be effective through 5 days after unprotected sex.</p> <p>Health Impacts: Your next menstrual period should begin on time. If not, you should get a pregnancy test. Usually safe for women who do not regularly use The Pill due to health risks.</p> <p>Most effective when used as soon as possible after unprotected intercourse. Get Plan B to keep on hand; ask your health care provider to give you the pills or prescription ahead of time.</p> <p>Note: Not designed to be used frequently or regularly. Does not affect an existing pregnancy.</p> <p>Access: If under 18, you must have a prescription. If over 18, you can get Plan B at a pharmacy counter with ID to prove your age.</p>	<p>How often: Daily</p> <p>Effectiveness: 92% - 99.7%</p> <p>What is it? Pills contain synthetic hormones similar to estrogen and progesterone produced by the body. “Mini” pills contain progestin only. Many types available - work with the clinic to find best formula for you.</p> <p>How to use: Swallow one Pill daily, at about the same time each day.</p> <p>How it works: Prevents ovaries from releasing an egg (ovulation), affects the lining of uterus, thickens cervical mucus which stops sperm from entering the uterus, prevents fertilization.</p> <p>Health Impacts: May cause nausea, breast tenderness, weight gain or loss, water retention, increased blood pressure, mood changes, headaches. Usually decreases menstrual cramps and amount of bleeding. Decreases chance of ovarian cancer. May increase chance of breast cancer. Not recommended for smokers over 35 or women with past heart attack or stroke, chest pain, blood clots, some cancers, liver disease, or high blood pressure.</p> <p>Note: A woman’s “period” can occur monthly, every 3 months, or not at all, depending on how often she takes the hormone pills.</p> <p>Taking antibiotics or barbiturates may make The Pill less effective. Some types of Pills can be used as Emergency Contraception. Smokers or women with high blood pressure can use the Mini-Pill.</p> <p>Access: Prescription required.</p>	<p>How often: Weekly</p> <p>Effectiveness: 92% - 99.7%</p> <p>What is it? A bandage-like patch a about 1 inch square that sticks to skin. Synthetic hormones similar to estrogen and progesterone produced by the body are absorbed through the skin.</p> <p>How it works: Prevents ovaries from releasing an egg (ovulation), affects the lining of uterus, thickens cervical mucus which stops sperm from entering the uterus, prevents fertilization.</p> <p>How to use: Apply one Patch per week for three weeks. No Patch on the fourth week. Then start the cycle over again.</p> <p>Health Impacts: May cause nausea, breast tenderness, weight gain or loss, water retention, increased blood pressure, mood changes, headaches, skin irritation near the Patch. May increase chance of breast cancer. Less is known about risks with The Patch as it is one of the newest hormonal methods. There seems to be a higher risk of heart attack and stroke than with other hormonal methods.</p> <p>Not recommended for smokers over 35 or women with past heart attack or stroke, chest pain, blood clots, some cancers, liver disease, or high blood pressure.</p> <p>Note: Less effective for women over 198 pounds. Taking antibiotics or barbiturates may make The Patch less effective.</p> <p>Access: Prescription required.</p>	<p>How often: Monthly</p> <p>Effectiveness: 92% - 99.7%</p> <p>What is it? The Ring is a thin, clear, flexible 2 inch circle placed inside the vagina that slowly releases synthetic hormones similar to estrogen and progesterone.</p> <p>How it works: Prevents ovaries from releasing an egg (ovulation), affects the lining of uterus, thickens cervical mucus which stops sperm from entering the uterus, prevents fertilization.</p> <p>How to use: A woman inserts the Ring into her vagina and leaves it for three weeks. On the fourth week she removes it and has a period, or she can leave it in to avoid having a period. Then on the fifth week she inserts a new ring.</p> <p>Health Impacts: May cause vaginal irritation, nausea, breast tenderness, weight gain or loss, water retention, increased blood pressure, mood changes, headaches. May increase chance of breast cancer.</p> <p>Not recommended for smokers over 35 or women with past heart attack or stroke, chest pain, blood clots, some cancers, liver disease, or high blood pressure.</p> <p>Note: One size fits all. Neither the partner usually feels the Ring. Taking antibiotics or barbiturates may make The Ring less effective.</p> <p>Access: Prescription required.</p>	<p>How often: Every 3 Months</p> <p>Effectiveness: 97% - 99.7%</p> <p>What is it? The Shot is an injection of progestin, a synthetic version of body’s natural progesterone. Lasts for 12 weeks (3 months).</p> <p>How it works: Prevents ovaries from releasing an egg (ovulation), affects the lining of uterus, and thickens cervical mucus which stops sperm from entering the uterus.</p> <p>How to use: Requires 4 trips to clinic each year.</p> <p>Health Impacts: For most women, their period is different than before. Usually causes periods to stop altogether, but some women have irregular bleeding. Usually causes weight gain. May cause loss of sex drive, acne, hair loss, mood swings, depression, nervousness, headaches. May increase chance of breast cancer. May decrease risk of cancer of ovary or uterus. May take long time to get pregnant after last shot. May cause loss of bone density and risk of osteoporosis. Not recommended for more than 2 years or for very young women.</p> <p>Note: It is not reversible. Once a woman gets the shot, the hormone is in her system for at least three months. Smokers can use Depo Provera.</p> <p>Access: Clinic visit required.</p>	<p>How often: Lasts 3 years</p> <p>Effectiveness: 99.6%</p> <p>What is it? A soft flexible rod about 1½ inches long that slowly releases synthetic hormones similar to progesterone. It is inserted by a clinician under the skin in a woman’s upper inner arm.</p> <p>How it works: Prevents ovaries from releasing an egg (ovulation), affects the lining of uterus, and thickens cervical mucus which stops sperm from entering the uterus.</p> <p>Health Impacts: The most common side effect is irregular bleeding; many have constant light spotting. You should not be pregnant when it is inserted, therefore it is usually inserted within the first five days of a woman’s menstrual cycle. It is possible to get an infection at the site where the implant is inserted or removed. Removal may be difficult and require surgery if rod breaks or becomes embedded too deeply.</p> <p>Note: Implanon lasts three years, but can be taken out at any time. When it is inserted, you will get a card to remind you of the removal date after which it is not reliable for birth control. Smokers can use Implanon.</p> <p>Access: Clinic visit required.</p>

Birth Control Comparison Chart

BARRIER METHODS

Cervical Cover	Diaphragm (with jelly or cream)	Spermicidal Foam, Cream, Gel, Suppository, Film	Sponge	Female Condom	Male Condom
Effectiveness: 68% - 91%	Effectiveness: 86% - 94%	Effectiveness: 71% - 82%	Effectiveness: 80 - 91%	Effectiveness: 79% - 95%	Effectiveness: 85% - 98%
<p>What is it? This is a cup or cap shaped device, 1 to 2 inches tall that covers a woman's cervix. Brand names are Lea's Shield and FemCap. Made of medical-grade silicone</p> <p>How it works: Creates a barrier that blocks sperm from passing into the uterus and prevents fertilization. Works best with spermicide added.</p> <p>How to use: Before sex, a woman places a small amount of spermicide gel or cream into the cap, then inserts the device into her vagina over her cervix. Must leave it in place for 8 hours after intercourse. Only need to apply spermicide once, even if intercourse is repeated. Can be put in up to 48 hours before sex.</p> <p>Health Impacts: Insertion and removal become easier with practice. Some women have allergy to spermicide. Giving birth affects the fit so go to your clinic for a new one after you give birth. Less reliable if you previously gave birth.</p> <p>Note: Not recommended if you have had toxic shock syndrome. More effective with good education and help to practice putting device over cervix.</p> <p>Access: Clinic visit required. Femcap size is based upon whether or not you have given birth. Leah's Shield is one size fits all.</p>	<p>What is it? A soft flexible rubber dome or cup about 2½ inches across that a woman fills with spermicide and inserts into vagina over the cervix. It is held in place by vaginal muscles.</p> <p>How it works: Creates a physical and chemical barrier. Stops sperm and prevents fertilization.</p> <p>How to use: Put 1-2 teaspoons of spermicidal gel or cream into center of Diaphragm. Insert over cervix. Leave in place for 6-8 hours after sex. Add more spermicide to vagina for each act of intercourse. Can be put in up to 2 hours before sex.</p> <p>Health Impacts: Can be messy, can interrupt sex play. Some women have allergy to spermicide or latex. Spermicide tastes bad. May increase chance of bladder infections. Get a new size if you gain or lose more than 15 pounds.</p> <p>Note: Not recommended if you have had toxic shock syndrome. Various styles available, clinic will help find a good fit for you. More effective with good education and help to practice putting diaphragm over cervix.</p> <p>Access: Clinic visit required to get the right size.</p>	<p>What is it? Spermicides are chemicals, usually Nonoxynol-9, that kill sperm. Can be made much more effective by using in combination with condom, cervical cap, or diaphragm.</p> <p>How to use: Follow instructions on container. Insert foam, gel, cream, suppository or vaginal contraceptive film (VCF) into vagina over cervix. Insert at least 15 minutes and up to two hours before intercourse. Repeat for each act of intercourse. Add more if one hour has passed before sex. Do not douche for at least 8 hours. Avoid not having enough in the container by buying extra.</p> <p>Health Impacts: Can be messy, may interrupt sex play. Tastes bad. Possible allergic reaction or vaginal irritation. Foaming types may irritate more than film or cream. Research indicates that spermicide increases the risk of HIV in sex workers who use it many times a day. When used frequently, it may irritate the vagina making it easier to catch HIV/STI.</p> <p>Note: Lubrication may increase pleasure. VCF is particularly discreet.</p> <p>Access: Easy to buy at drug stores.</p>	<p>What is it? A small soft round bowl-shaped piece of synthetic sponge with loop attached. Contains spermicide.</p> <p>How it works: The Sponge is both a chemical and physical barrier. It blocks sperm, absorbs and kills sperm.</p> <p>How to use: Moisten with water then insert along the back wall of the vagina with the dimple side toward the cervix. It can be inserted up to 12 hours before sex and can be used for multiple acts of sex. It must be left in place for 6 to 8 hours after intercourse. Pull the loop to remove the Sponge.</p> <p>Health Impacts: May cause irritation of the vagina if a woman is allergic to the spermicide. Research indicates that spermicide increases the risk of HIV in sex workers when used frequently.</p> <p>Note: Less effective (40-80%) for women who have previously given birth.</p> <p>Access: Easy to buy at drug stores.</p>	<p>What is it? A soft, loose polyurethane pouch that fits inside vagina. Flexible rings at each end of pouch hold it in place. Prelubricated.</p> <p>How to use: Insert smaller inner ring deep inside vagina. Larger ring stays outside over vulva. Can be inserted 8 hours before sex. Can be used by people with latex allergy. Can be used with any lubricant. Extra lubricant recommended.</p> <p>How it works: Creates a natural feeling barrier. Pouch catches semen and sperm, preventing it from entering woman's body. Blocks sperm, STIs and HIV.</p> <p>Health Impacts: Female condoms are the only female controlled protection against HIV. With practice it can be easy to use. Outer ring may cause soreness or pleasure for one or both partners. Males usually report no reduction in sensation as compared to male condom.</p> <p>Note: Bulky. Makes noise during movement. May be awkward in beginning but gets easier over time. New styles are being designed and may become available soon.</p> <p>Access: Available at drug stores.</p>	<p>What is it? A thin latex cover that fits over the hard penis. Also known as 'rubber' or 'glove.' Styles include lubricated or non-lubricated, ribbed or non-ribbed, bright colors or clear, flavored.</p> <p>How it works: Traps sperm inside condom so it cannot enter woman's body. Put on before any genital contact.</p> <p>How to use: Place condom on tip of erect (hard) penis, unroll to the base leaving an empty space at tip to collect the semen. Hold rim so it does not slip off, especially at withdrawal. Do not reuse.</p> <p>Health Impacts: Latex or polyurethane types block STIs and HIV. Very effective at preventing pregnancy when used with spermicides. May decrease sensation for male. Interruption may cause loss of erection. Possible allergy to latex. Lambskin or 'natural' membrane condoms do not protect against HIV/STIs.</p> <p>Note: Use with personal lubricants to increase pleasure and make condoms less likely to break. To maintain arousal and encourage continued use, be creative and playful.</p> <p>Access: Condoms are cheap and easy to buy. Often available for free.</p>

Birth Control Comparison Chart

KNOWLEDGE-BASED METHODS

Sex without risk	Fertility Awareness	Withdrawal Pulling Out
	Effectiveness: 80% - 98%	Effectiveness: 73% - 96%
<p>Sex and sexuality are natural, pleasurable parts of life. Your sexuality lasts your whole life time and is unique to you. You are a sexual person whether or not you are having sex.</p> <p>Women and men can find intimacy, emotional and intellectual closeness, pleasure and even orgasms from a range of activities that do not lead to pregnancy.</p> <p>Not having intercourse opens the door for a better understanding of your own and your partner's bodies and responses which could result in better communication and more satisfaction.</p> <p>Examples include: use of sex toys, oral or anal sex, manual stimulation, masturbation, same sex sex, telephone or talking sex, fantasizing, play-acting, reading or writing your own erotic literature.</p> <p>Waiting to have sex, taking a break from sex, or saying no to sex are also ways you can assert your personal power to prevent pregnancy.</p> <p>How to use: To prevent pregnancy, don't have penis-in-vagina intercourse. If release of sperm occurs, keep it far away from vagina.</p> <p>Health Impacts: Contact with bodily fluids carries the risk of STIs and HIV/AIDS.</p> <p>Access: Free and available anytime.</p>	<p>What is it? Fertility Awareness is learning the changes an individual woman's body goes through during her menstrual cycle to determine her fertile time (the days she is most likely to get pregnant) and then not having sex or using a barrier method during the fertile time.</p> <p>How to use: Involves calendar charting plus daily monitoring of cervical fluid, position of the cervix using a speculum and mirror, and taking basal body temperature. This combined information is used to determine beginning and end of fertile time. Cycle Beads can help keep track. More effective when the male partner is involved in planning and use.</p> <p>Health Impacts: No health risks or side effects. Increases knowledge and awareness of woman's body. Can increase communication between partners. Does not protect against HIV/STIs.</p> <p>Note: Fertility Awareness takes time, effort and dedication every day. Effectiveness: depends on consistent monitoring plus commitment to use barrier during fertile time.</p> <p>Access: Requires thermometer, calendar, charts, cycle beads, speculum, mirror, flashlight, etc.</p>	<p>What is it? The man pulls his penis out of the vagina before climax and ejaculation (before coming). Also called 'coitus interruptus.' Depends on male's self knowledge and self control.</p> <p>How to use: Male should urinate and wipe the tip of penis before intercourse. Then he must pull completely out before coming. Effectiveness: increases when couples work together. Even sperm outside the vagina on the vulva can travel inside and cause pregnancy.</p> <p>How it works: Keeps sperm out of a woman's vagina. Contrary to public perception, pre-ejaculate usually does not contain sperm.</p> <p>Health Impacts: Drugs, alcohol, young age or lack of sexual experience can reduce ability to use withdrawal effectively. Can be difficult for teens to use. Less effective for men who have multiple orgasms. Can increase communication between partners.</p> <p>Note: Withdrawal is one of the few options for males. It is much more effective than not using any method of birth control. A man who is willing to use self restraint shows his respect for the woman's desire to not get pregnant. Reduces, but does not eliminate risk of transfer of HIV from male to female.</p> <p>Access: Free and available anytime.</p>

LONG TERM OR PERMANENT

IUD: Mirena Intra Uterine Device	IUD: Paragard T Intra Uterine Device	Sterilization
Lasts 5 years	Lasts 10 years	Once, permanent
Effectiveness: 99.9%	Effectiveness: 99.2% - 99.4%	Effectiveness: 99.9%
<p>What is it? A small (1 to 1½ inch) plastic device with a string attached, shaped like a T. Releases synthetic progestin hormone. Inserted through the cervix into the uterus at a clinic.</p> <p>How it works: IUD causes changes in the cervical mucous, fallopian tubes and the lining of the uterus to slow or stop movement of sperm and egg to prevent pregnancy.</p> <p>Health Impacts: May cause irregular bleeding or periods may stop. Each month check by using finger to feel for IUD's string at cervix. The risk of uterine infection goes up if you or your partner has lots of other partners.</p> <p>Note: Lasts 5 years. Removal by a clinician is fast and easy.</p> <p>Access: Clinic visit required.</p>	<p>What is it? A small (1 to 1½ inch) plastic device with a string attached, shaped like a T with a tiny copper wire wrapped around the stem. Inserted through the cervix into the uterus at a clinic.</p> <p>How it works: IUD causes changes in the cervical mucous, fallopian tubes and the lining of the uterus to slow or stop movement of sperm and egg to prevent pregnancy.</p> <p>Health Impacts: May cause more painful, heavier periods. Should not be used by women who are allergic to copper. Each month check by using finger to feel for IUD's string at cervix. The risk of uterine infection goes up if you or your partner has lots of other partners.</p> <p>Note: Lasts 10 or more years. Removal by a clinician is fast and easy. Cost effective over time.</p> <p>Access: Clinic visit required.</p>	<p>How it works: Prevents egg and sperm from meeting.</p> <p>What is it? <i>For Females</i>, it is an out-patient procedure to block, close or cut fallopian tubes to prevent eggs from traveling through, thus no eggs are available for fertilization. Two types are available for women: surgical tubal ligation or non-surgical blockage of the tubes with Essure.</p> <p><i>For Males</i>, a vasectomy is an out-patient procedure to close or cut the vas deferens or tubes inside scrotum to prevent sperm from being released from the man's body. The man's body continues to make semen, but it does not contain sperm. Not effective until after about 20 ejaculations after surgery. See doctor for a sperm test before relying on this method.</p> <p>Health Impacts: Excellent if you don't want to reproduce or are finished having children. Permanent. Does not protect against HIV/STIs.</p> <p>Note: Young people with no children may have difficulty finding a doctor to perform sterilization. Not considered reversible. Possible regret later in life.</p> <p>Access: Doctor required.</p>

Birth Control Comparison Chart

HORMONAL: Add hormones to a woman's body to alter her menstrual cycle and reproductive organs.*

BARRIER: Place a short-term physical or chemical wall between egg and sperm.**

KNOWLEDGE-BASED: Use knowledge, awareness and information to guide decisions about sexual activity.

LONGTERM OR PERMANENT: Physically alter reproductive organs.

* Many people wonder if hormones are safe? The effects of hormones are both short term and long term. Women should know there is a short term very rare but serious risk of heart attack or stroke, and possible long term benefit of reduced risk of ovarian cancer in old age.

** The only way to block HIV is a condom.

About Cedar River Clinics (800-572-4223)

- We have a vision of a world where all women freely make their own decisions regarding their bodies, reproduction and sexuality—a world where women can fulfill their own unique potential and live healthy, whole lives.
- We provide first and second trimester abortion, medication abortion, STI testing and treatment, pregnancy testing, well woman exam, pap test. Free birth control under Take Charge.
- Located in Tacoma, Renton, and Yakima, Washington State, USA.

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For colorful paper copies contact info@CedarRiverClinics.org, 800-572-4223, or 106 East E Street, Yakima, WA 98901.

**Find detailed factsheets about each method at:
www.Birth-Control-Comparison.info**

Use this chart to compare methods and find contraceptive choices to fit you.

Women and their partners use birth control to prevent pregnancy when they are not yet ready to start a family, and to determine the number and spacing of their children. They also use birth control when they are finished having babies. They may choose different methods for different stages in life. The various methods affect individual women differently. No one method is best for everyone.

Choosing contraception (birth control) is an important decision. This poster may help answer your questions, such as:

<i>How do I use it?</i>	<i>How does it work?</i>
<i>How effective is it?</i>	<i>Will I use it every time?</i>
<i>How will it affect my partner?</i>	<i>Are there side-effects?</i>
<i>What will I do if it doesn't work?</i>	<i>Where do I get it?</i>

Getting Birth Control

Teens and low-income women and men can usually get low-cost birth control through community clinics or public health centers. Many health insurance plans cover birth control. IF you live in Washington State, apply for a year of free birth control paid by the Take Charge program. Call 800-770-4334. If a pharmacy refuses to give you birth control, please let us know.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness: is the rate of success at preventing pregnancy per 1000 women over one year's time. If a method is listed as 99.5% effective then 995 out of 1000 women will not get pregnant in one year on average (and 5 out of 1000 will get pregnant). When two rates are listed, the lower rate is "typical" use. The higher rate is "perfect" use when the method is used correctly and consistently. The rates were published in the 2004 book *Contraceptive Technology*. For comparison, 850 out of 1000 women will get pregnant in one year with no birth control.

Double Up

Simultaneous use of two methods reduces chance of pregnancy. Some good combinations are a male condom and a cervical cap, spermicide and a male condom, or withdrawal and spermicide.

Birth Control Comparison Chart

Emergency Contraception Plan B = Morning After Pill

You can prevent pregnancy after sex by taking Plan B Emergency Contraception. Use Plan B if you were not planning to have sex, or if you were coerced or attacked. Call 1-888-NOT-2-LATE or go to www.NOT-2-LATE.com to find a location near you. Plan B does not cause abortion; it is a completely different medication than the Abortion Pill. The sooner you take Plan B after intercourse, the more effective it is.

HIV/AIDS and STI

Despite many choices for birth control, there is only **ONE** way to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted infections (STI). Partners **must** use a female or male condom, dental dam or plastic wrap to prevent blood, semen or vaginal secretions from passing from one partner to another during vaginal, anal or oral sex.

Pap Tests

Regular **Pap Tests** are the best way to detect early abnormal cervical cells that may lead to cancer. A common sexually transmitted infection called HPV (Human PapillomaVirus) can cause cervical cancer. To protect against forms of HPV, the HPV Vaccine is an option for girls ages 9 to 26.

Relationships

Open and honest conversation with partners, parents, and friends can help in choosing a method and in making it more effective. People who use birth control can learn a lot from each other.

Breast Feeding

Breast feeding is 98-99% effective for birth control, but only when all three of the following things are true: when a woman breast feeds exclusively (no formula or baby food) with feedings no more than 4-6 hours apart, when it is less than 6 months since she gave birth, and when her periods have not returned after giving birth. Furthermore, breast feeding women may want to avoid using hormonal birth control because small amounts of the hormones are passed to the baby in the milk, and some types of hormonal birth control decrease milk production.

Abortion

If contraception doesn't work or isn't used and pregnancy results, you have three options: abortion, parenting, or adoption. Abortion does not stop a woman from getting pregnant in the future.

Human Rights

Using birth control is a personal decision. Government, parents, friends and partners should support your decisions. If someone attempts to stop you, force you, or undermine your decisions about birth control, it may be a sign they want to control other aspects of your life. You have a fundamental human right to make your own decisions about your body, sexuality and reproduction. The purpose of birth control is to allow a woman to enjoy a full range of sexual expression without fear of getting pregnant. Every woman has a human right to her sexuality.