



BIRTH CONTROL...
What's Right For You?

Being sexually active or practicing abstinence is your personal choice. If you are sexually active or thinking about it, this pamphlet has information to help you consider birth control methods that may be right for you. It is recommended that you discuss your birth control options with a health care provider; each method has benefits and risks to consider when making a decision.

Note: For those who are sexually active and use no form of birth control 85 out of 100 women will become pregnant within one year*.

**STIs: Sexually transmitted infections
(previously called sexually transmitted
diseases, STDs)**

Consider the following when making choices about sexual activity and birth control:

- How is your relationship with your partner? Can you talk about sex and birth control together? Equal communication is an important part of a healthy relationship.
- Talking about sex, birth control and condoms may be difficult, practice your discussion with a friend.
- How comfortable are you about sharing responsibilities such as birth control or parenting?



BIRTH CONTROL METHODS:
Barrier methods:

Male Condoms

- A latex, polyurethane or lambskin sheath worn over the penis during sexual activity. Condoms prevent pregnancy by blocking the sperm from entering the vagina. Latex and polyurethane condoms also protect against most STIs.
- Effectiveness: 82% - 98% effective for birth control, depending on consistent and correct use.
- Where to get them:
 - Local drug stores
 - Sexual Health Clinics



Female Condoms

- A soft, loose fitting polyurethane sheath with a flexible ring at each end. The female condom stops sperm from entering the vagina. They also protect against most STIs.
- Effectiveness: 79% to 95% for birth control, depending on consistent and correct use.
- Where to get them:
 - Sexual Health Clinics



Diaphragm

- It is a dome shaped rubber disc with a flexible rim that works to prevent pregnancy by covering the cervix so sperm cannot reach the uterus.
- Effectiveness: 88% to 94% for birth control, depending on consistent and correct use.
- A prescription is needed.
- Diaphragms do not prevent the transmission of STIs therefore condoms should always be used during sexual activity.
- Where to get them:
 - Local drug stores



BIRTH CONTROL METHODS:
Hormonal methods:



The Pill

- A daily pill which is made up of the hormones (estrogen & progestin), similar to the estrogen and progestin which is naturally found in your body. Some types consist of progestin only. Taking the pill “at the same time” each day provides a continuous level of hormone which prevents the release of an egg from the ovaries.
- Effectiveness: 91% to 99.7% for birth control, depending on consistent and correct use.
- A prescription is needed.
- Where to get them:
 - Local drug stores
 - Sexual Health Clinics or Health Care Providers.
- The pill **does not** prevent the transmission of STIs therefore condoms should always be used during sexual activity.



Transdermal Patch

- A patch which contains estrogen and progesterin hormones. It is placed on the body like a band aid and the hormones are slowly absorbed through the skin. It works like the pill by preventing the release of an egg from the ovaries.
- Effectiveness: 91% to 99.7% for birth control, depending on consistent and correct use.
- A prescription is needed.
- Where to get them:
 - Local drug stores
 - Sexual Health Clinics or Health Care Providers.
- The transdermal patch **does not** prevent the transmission of STIs therefore condoms should always be used during sexual activity.



Vaginal Ring

- It is a flexible ring that a woman inserts into her vagina. It releases a combination of progestin and estrogen and works like the pill by preventing the release of an egg from the ovaries.
- The vaginal ring stays in place for three consecutive weeks and then for the fourth week it is removed; this is the week that you will menstruate.
- Effectiveness: 91% to 99.7% for birth control, depending on consistent and correct use.
- A prescription is needed.
- Where to get them:
 - Local drug stores
 - Sexual Health Clinics or Health Care Providers.
- The vaginal ring **does not** prevent the transmission of STIs therefore condoms should always be used during sexual activity.

Progestin Only Injectable

- The injection consists of a hormone (progestin) that is given every 12 weeks (4 times yearly) to prevent pregnancy. It affects bone density, especially in teens, so it may not be the method of first choice.
- Effectiveness: 94% to 99.8% for birth control.
- A prescription is needed.
- Where to get them:
 - Local drug stores
 - Health Care Providers.
- The injection does not prevent the transmission of STIs therefore condoms should always be used during sexual activity.



Emergency Contraceptive Pill

- A hormonal pill that is used to prevent pregnancy from a single act of unprotected intercourse. It works by preventing the release of an egg from the ovaries, or preventing sperm and egg from uniting.
- It is not to be used as a regular form of birth control.
- Effectiveness: 75% to 89% (if used within 120 hours of unprotected sex - the earlier the better).
- Where to get them:
 - Local drug stores
 - Sexual Health Clinics or Health Care Providers.
- Unprotected sex puts you at risk for STIs, consider getting tested.





BIRTH CONTROL METHODS:
Spermicidal methods:

All

- Spermicide contains chemicals that kill sperm. Most spermicides are inserted into the vagina before sexual intercourse. There are many forms of spermicidal products: foam, gels, creams, films, sponge and tablets.
- Frequent use of spermicides containing nonoxynol-9 may be associated with an increased risk for HIV transmission.
- Effectiveness: 72% to 82% for birth control, depending on consistent and correct use.
- Where to get them:
 - Local drug stores.
- Spermicides **do not** prevent the transmission of STIs therefore condoms should always be used during sexual activity.



Intrauterine Device:

IUDs:

- An IUD is a small device which is inserted into the uterus by a health care provider. It remains in the uterus for 3-5 years and is then removed by a health care provider. It can either contain hormones or not.
- The IUD works by affecting the lining of the uterus and can prevent ovulation or implantation.
- Effectiveness: 99.2% to 99.9% for birth control, depending on consistent and correct use.
- A prescription is required.
- Where to get them:
 - Local drug stores
 - Sexual Health Clinics or Health Care Providers.
- IUDs **do not** prevent the transmission of STIs therefore condoms should always be used during sexual activity.



Summary of Birth Control Methods

Birth Control Options	Effectiveness (%) (Typical*- Perfect *Use)
Male Condoms	82% - 98%
Female Condoms	79% - 95%
Diaphragm	88% - 94%
Spermicide	72% - 82%
Emergency Contraceptive Pill (ECP)	75% - 89%
The Pill	91% - 99.7%
Transdermal Patch	91% - 99.7%
Vaginal Ring	91% - 99.7%
Progestin Only Injectable	94% - 99.8%
IUD	99.2% - 99.9%

*Hatcher, R, et al (2011). Contraceptive Technologies, 20th Revised Edition. New York: Ardent Media, Inc

You Should Know!!!

1. **The Birth Control Pill does not cause weight gain.** The pill can cause an increased appetite, but the hormone levels are low enough that taking the pill will not cause weight gain.
2. **Withdrawing before ejaculation can still result in pregnancy.** Before a male ejaculates, a small amount of lubricating fluid is released which contains sperm. Therefore, any vaginal penetration by the penis can result in pregnancy.
3. **You can get pregnant the first time you have sex.** It only takes one time to become pregnant. If you menstruate, you can get pregnant. Generally, younger girls are more fertile than an older woman and can get pregnant more easily.
4. **The rhythm method is not considered a reliable birth control option for most people.** Ovulation can occur under different circumstances. If you choose the rhythm method, and don't want to get pregnant, be sure to use a backup barrier method.

What If I Cannot Afford Birth Control?

Some youth oriented clinics provide birth control products to their clients at reduced costs.

Durham Region Health Department
Sexual Health Clinics

Oshawa	905-433-8901 1-800-314-8533
Pickering	905-420-8781

For more information visit:
durham.ca/sexualhealth

Other Helpful Websites:
sexualityandu.ca



HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

Durham Health Connection Line
905-666-6241 or 1-800-841-2729
durham.ca/sexualhealth

If you require this information in an accessible format,
contact 1-800-841-2729.



* Hatcher, R, et al. (2011). Contraceptive Technology,
20th Revised Edition. New York: Ardent Media, Inc.

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