

## Which Contraceptive is Right for You?

**Hormonal contraceptives** (listed with shaded background) prevent pregnancy by changing the hormone levels in a woman's body.

**Non-hormonal contraceptives** prevent pregnancy by providing a barrier against sperm, or interfering with sperm movement, or creating a difficult environment for sperm to travel. These methods do not use hormones.

**Emergency contraception (EC) can prevent pregnancy after any instance of unprotected sexual intercourse.** There are two types of EC: pills or insertion of Copper-T IUD. Most women can safely use EC pills, even if they cannot use birth control pills regularly. Visit [www.not-2-late.com](http://www.not-2-late.com) or call (800) NOT-2-LATE to find out where to obtain EC.

Method	Products Available in US	How to Use	Use Before Every Act of Intercourse?	Non-Contraceptive Benefits and Disease Protection	Duration of Method
<b>Most Effective (typically prevents pregnancy &gt;99% of the time)</b>					
Abstinence/ Outercourse	None	Do not have vaginal sex	N/A	No non-contraceptive benefits; full protection against STDs/STIs (STDs/STIs can be passed during oral and anal sex)	N/A
Female sterilization	Essure <sup>®</sup> , Laparoscopy, mini-laparotomy, laparotomy	Procedure done by health care provider	No	Protection against ovarian cancer; no protection against STDs/STIs	Lifetime
Male sterilization (vasectomy)	Conventional vasectomy, no-scalpel vasectomy	Procedure done by health care provider	No	No non-contraceptive benefits; no protection against STDs/STIs	Lifetime
Intrauterine device (IUD)	ParaGard <sup>®</sup>	Inserted into uterus by health care provider	No	No non-contraceptive benefits; no protection against STDs/STIs	Up to 10 years
Intrauterine system (IUS)	Mirena <sup>®</sup>	Inserted into uterus by health care provider	No	Periods lighter/less painful; protection against some cancers; no protection against STDs/STIs	Up to 5 years
Implants	Implanon <sup>®</sup> , Norplant <sup>®</sup> (not available in US)	Inserted by health care provider into arm	No	Periods lighter/less painful; protection against uterine cancer; no protection against STDs/STIs	Up to 5 years
<b>Very Effective (typically prevents pregnancy 91% - 99% of the time)</b>					
Pills	Many brands of progestin + estrogen or progestin-only	Swallow pill every day at approximately the same time	No	Periods lighter/less painful; protection against some cancers & breast disease; no protection against STDs/STIs	1 month
Injectables	Depo-Provera <sup>®</sup>	Get intramuscular or subcutaneous injection monthly every 3 months	No	Periods lighter/less painful; lessens cramps; protection against some cancers; no protection against STDs/STIs	3 months
Patch	OrthoEvra <sup>®</sup>	Apply patch to skin once a week for 3 weeks, then remove patch for 1 week	No	Periods lighter/less painful; may protect against some cancers & breast disease; no protection against STDs/STIs	1 month
Vaginal ring	NuvaRing <sup>®</sup>	Insert ring to vagina for 3 weeks, then remove for 1 week	No	Periods lighter/less painful; may protect against some cancers & breast disease; no protection against STDs/STIs	1 month
<b>Moderately Effective (typically prevents pregnancy 81% - 90% of the time)</b>					
Male condom ("rubbers")	Many brands widely available	Apply to penis immediately before sex	Yes	A lot of protection against STDs/STIs	1 act of intercourse
Female condom	Reality Female Condom	Insert into vagina up to 8 hours before sex	Yes	A lot of protection against STDs/STIs	1 act of intercourse
Sponge	Today <sup>®</sup> Sponge	Insert into vagina up to 24 hours before sex	Yes	No non-contraceptive benefits; no protection against disease STDs/STIs	Up to 24 hours
Diaphragm	Several brands available	Insert into vagina up to 8 hours before sex	Yes	None; No HIV protection; some decreased risk of some STDs/STIs	1 act of intercourse
<b>Effective (typically prevents pregnancy up to 80% of the time)</b>					
Fertility awareness ("natural family planning")	Billings Ovulation Method, Rhythm Method, Standard Days Method, (Cycle Beads) or Symptothermal Method	Monitor cycle to determine when fertility likely/unlikely	No	No non-contraceptive benefits; no protection against STDs/STIs	N/A
Cervical cap	FemCap <sup>®</sup> , or Lea's Shield <sup>®</sup>	Insert into vagina up to 48 hours before sex	Yes	No non-contraceptive benefits; no protection against STDs/STIs	1 act of intercourse
Spermicide	Various foams, creams, jellies, film, suppositories	Insert into vagina no more the 1 hour before sex	Yes	No non-contraceptive benefits; no protection against STDs/STIs	1 act of intercourse