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Which contraceptive method should I use? 10 best choices that will fit your needs

Do you want to enjoy your sexual life with pleasure and without concerns about getting pregnant? Here are 10 contraceptive methods for you!

We have come a long way regarding sexual reproductive rights and health. Nowadays, if you want to enjoy a pleasurable sex life and don't have the desire to get pregnant, there are a lot of possibilities to do so. But do you know which contraceptive method suits your needs better?

If you want to discover all you need to know about the main possibilities of contraceptive methods used these days, check out the rest of our post.

10 contraceptive methods and their main characteristics

There are so many contraceptive methods out there that we can get overwhelmed by so much information, right?

To facilitate your choice, we have separated the 10 most used contraceptive methods here and described them briefly to understand their effectiveness, how they work how much longer they function and other essential information.

Take a look down here.

1 - Contraceptive implant

Effectiveness: more than 99%

Time: up to 3 years

How does it work: this is a small flexible plastic rod placed under your upper arm's skin. It releases progesterone into your bloodstream, which prevents the release of a monthly egg and also makes it more difficult for the sperm to move through the cervix. This is done by the thickening of the cervical mucus.

Do you usually forget to take the pill? This contraceptive is very useful for people like you. If you want, it can be taken out at any time.

Some important information you need to know is that your periods can become irregular, lighter, heavier or longer. Also, you may get acne and experience some headaches in the first months.

2 - Intrauterine system (IUS)

Effectiveness: more than 99%

Time: up to five years

How does it work: this is a small T-shaped plastic device that is put into your uterus and releases a hormone to avoid pregnancy.

The IUS can be taken out anytime, so you can get pregnant immediately after its removal. Among its possible side effects are lighter periods, mood swings, skin problems or breast tenderness. Also, it can help people that have heavy or painful periods.

3 - Intrauterine device (IUD)

Effectiveness: more than 99%

Time: up to 5 to 10 years

How does it work: this is a copper device, similar to an IUS, also a tiny T-shaped device, put into the uterus by a doctor or nurse.

It releases copper to avoid pregnancy and can also be called as coil or copper coil. As well as the IUS, it can be taken out at any time.

A few differences from the IUS is that the IUD can make periods heavier, longer or more painful, especially in the first three to six months after its insertion. On the other hand, it doesn't have side effects such as acne, headaches or breast tenderness.

4 - Sterilization

Effectiveness: more than 99%

Time: permanent

How does it work: it is an operation to prevent pregnancy permanently. This is done by blocking the fallopian tubes, preventing sperm from reaching the egg.

If you are questioning whether sterilization affects your hormone levels or periods, the answer is no. The eggs will still be released from the ovaries in a normal way, and you will still have your periods normally. The only thing that will change is that your tubes will be blocked.

You may be attentive to the fact that this is a challenging procedure to be reversed, so be sure you want to do that before taking any decision.

5 - Combined pill

Effectiveness: generally less than 95% with typical use

Time: taken every day for three weeks out of every month

How does it work: combined pills contain synthetic hormones such as oestrogen and progesterone, also produced naturally in our ovaries. It aims to stop sperm from reaching the egg or even stop ovulation altogether.

This method requires a certain routine from you because it's necessary to take one pill every day at the same hour, preferably for 21 days straight, and then pause for seven days.

During this week, you will have a bleed, just like a period. Start retaking the pill after these seven days. Note that some medications can make the combined pill less effective, so make sure to talk to your doctor.

Among its side effects are mood swings, nausea and headaches, which can ease over the months. On the good side, it may help with heavy and painful periods, PMS or endometriosis and can sometimes reduce acne.

6 - Pill

Effectiveness: generally less than 95% with typical use

Time: every day

How does it work: this is the traditional progestogen-only pill that prevents pregnancy by thickening the mucus in the cervix. Consequently, this stops the sperm from reaching the egg.

This contraceptive method must also be taken daily, but unlike the combined pill, there are no pauses between packs. Similarly to the combined pill, it can have its effectiveness affected by some medications.

Among its side effects are lighter periods, or they may stop altogether, acne, breast tenderness, mood changes, headache and decreased sex drive. It can also stop ovulation altogether.

7 - Vaginal ring

Effectiveness: generally less than 95% with typical use

Time: renewed once a month

How does it work: imagine a small, soft plastic ring placed in your vagina.

This device releases doses of hormones in the bloodstream to prevent the release of an egg every month. Also, it thickens the cervical mucus, which makes it more difficult for the sperm to move through the cervix.

When you use a vaginal ring, your periods can be lighter and less painful, and your premenstrual symptoms can be eased.

You can leave it in for 21 days and must remove it, leaving seven days ring free. The protection continues during this break. After that, you need to put a new ring inside.

You can insert it by yourself and don't need the help of a doctor or a nurse. Just make sure your hands are clean and read the instructions for an effective insertion.

8 - Contraceptive injection

Effectiveness: generally less than 95% with typical use

Time: renewed every eight weeks or 12, depending on the type

How does it work: the injection releases progesterone into your bloodstream, which thickens the mucus and prevents the release of a monthly egg.

This is a very useful method for those who can't remember to take the pill. You just have to repeat the injection before the old one expires or becomes ineffective.

Between its side effects are weight gain, headaches, mood swings and irregular bleeding. Another important information is that it can take up to one year for your fertility to return to normal after the injection leaves your body.

9 - Internal and external condom

Effectiveness: 98% and 95% (if used correctly)

Time: every time you have sex

How does it work: the external condom, sometimes called male condom, needs to be worn on the penis. Still, the internal condom, also called female condom, needs to be put inside the vagina.

Popularly known as female and male condoms, this method is the only one that also prevents STIs (sexually transmitted infections). The condoms are made from soft, synthetic

latex or even with latex-free materials, from those allergic to this component, such as polyisoprene or polyurethane.

The way condoms work is basically preventing the semen from getting to the womb. That's why it needs to be placed before the contact between the penis and the vagina. Each condom can be used only one time.

When using a condom, you must remember that the only safe lubricant to use is water-based. The other can break the condom causing its ineffectiveness.

10 - Diaphragm

Effectiveness: 92% to 96% when used correctly

Time: every time you have sex

How does it work: it's a circular dome made of soft silicone that covers the cervix preventing the sperm from getting to the uterus.

At least, we have the diaphragm, a dispositive that is a barrier method of contraception, inserted in the vagina each time you have sex before it begins. It must be left in place at least six hours after sex.

Besides that, you need to use it with a spermicide, a gel that kills all the sperm. This needs to be done, especially if the diaphragm is inside your vagina for three hours or more before having sex with penetration or if you will have sex with penetration again. You don't have to take it out to re-apply the spermicide.

Summing up: which one should I choose?

No contraceptive method can be exactly perfect for you, after all, each one of them have characteristics that can be seen either as positive or negative effects depending on your lifestyle and preferences.

So, which one should you choose? The best choice is the one that fits better in your routine, preferences, and which thing you value the most. One idea is to use this [quiz from Planned Parenthood](#) that can help you choose wisely. Another tool is the one available in [Contraception Choices](#).

Ready to enjoy a pleased sex life without worries? Tell us in the comments your doubts and which one is your choice!

References:

- NHS. Which method of contraception suits me?
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