



BIRTH CONTROL OPTIONS: WHICH ONE IS RIGHT FOR ME?

HORMONAL OPTIONS

Hormonal options provide continuous protection. They are available by prescription only. They prevent pregnancy by thickening cervical mucus and thinning the endometrium; some also prevent ovulation. Hormonal methods do not protect against STDs.

Method	How well does it work?	How to use	Pros	Cons
The Pill	92-99%	Must take the pill daily	Can make periods more regular and less painful Can improve PMS symptoms Can improve acne Lowers risk of ovarian cancer	May cause nausea, weight gain, headaches - but these can be relieved by changing to a new brand May cause spotting the first 1-2 months Does not protect against HIV or other STDs
Progestin-Only Pills	92-99%	Must take <u>at the same time</u> each day		Often cause spotting, which may last for many months May cause depression, hair or skin changes Does not protect against HIV or other STDs
The Shot Depo-Provera	97-99%	Get shot every 3 months	Each shot works for 12 weeks Helps prevent cancer of the lining of the uterus No pill to take daily	May cause spotting, no period, weight gain, depression, hair or skin changes Side effects may last up to 6 months after you stop the shots Does not protect against HIV or other STDs
The Patch Ortho Evra	92-99%	Apply a new patch once a week for 3 weeks No patch in week 4	Can make periods more regular and less painful No pill to take daily	Can irritate skin under the patch May cause spotting the first 1-2 months Does not protect against HIV or other STDs

Method	How well does it work?	How to use	Pros	Cons
The Ring NuvaRing	92-99%	Insert a small ring into the vagina Change ring each month	Can make periods more regular and less painful No pill to take daily	Can increase vaginal discharge May cause spotting the first 1-2 months Does not protect against HIV or other STDs
The Implant Nexplanon	>99%	Must be inserted (under skin of upper arm) and removed by a doctor	Long-lasting (up to 3 years) No pill to take daily	May cause irregular bleeding (spotting, no periods or heavy periods) After 1 year, many women have no period at all Does not protect against HIV or other STDs
Progestin IUD Mirena, Skyla	99%	Must be inserted (into uterus) and removed by a doctor	Mirena may be left in place up to 7 years Skyla may be left in place up to 3 years May improve period cramps and bleeding	May cause lighter periods, spotting, or no period at all Rarely, uterus is injured during placement Does not prevent against HIV or other STDs

NON-HORMONAL OPTIONS

Non-hormonal options cause fewer side effects, and can be used only when needed.

Method	How well does it work?	How to use	Pros	Cons
Male Condom	85-98%	Use a new condom each time you have sex	Can buy at many stores Protects against HIV and many other STDs	Can break or slip off Can decrease sensation
Female Condom	79-95%	Use a new condom each time you have sex	Can buy at many stores Good for people with latex allergy Protects against HIV and many other STDs	May be hard to insert May slip out of place during sex

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

Emergency contraception is a hormonal contraceptive pill taken within 5 days after unprotected sex; works best the *sooner* you take it (75-89% effective within 3 days). Women and men can purchase Plan B without a prescription; another brand, Ella, requires a prescription. If pack contains 2 pills, take both at once. Possible side effects include upset stomach or nausea, spotting, and/or next period coming early or late. Does not protect against HIV or other STDs.