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Birth Control Methods

Q: What is the best method of birth control (or contraception)?

A: There is no “best” method of birth control. Each method has its pros and cons.

All women and men can have control over when, and if, they become parents. Making choices about birth control, or contraception, isn’t easy. There are many things to think about. To get started, learn about birth control methods you or your partner can use to prevent pregnancy. You can also talk with your doctor about the choices.

Before choosing a birth control method, think about:

- Your overall health
- How often you have sex
- The number of sex partners you have
- If you want to have children someday
- How well each method works to prevent pregnancy
- Possible side effects
- Your comfort level with using the method

Keep in mind, even the most effective birth control methods can fail. But your chances of getting pregnant are lowest if the method you choose always is used correctly and every time you have sex.

Q: What are the different types of birth control?

A: You can choose from many methods of birth control. They are grouped by how they work:

Types of Birth Control

Continuous Abstinence

**Natural Family Planning/
Rhythm Method**

Barrier Methods

- Contraceptive Sponge
- Diaphragm, Cervical Cap, and Cervical Shield
- Female Condom
- Male Condom

Hormonal Methods

- Oral Contraceptives — Combined pill (“The pill”)
- Oral Contraceptives — Progestin-only pill (“Mini-pill”)
- The Patch
- Shot/Injection
- Vaginal Ring

Implantable Devices

- Implantable Rods
- Intrauterine Devices

Permanent Birth Control Methods

- Sterilization Implant
- Surgical Sterilization

Emergency Contraception

