

# Safe Sex & Contraception



## Natural- Rhythm Method

### How does it work?

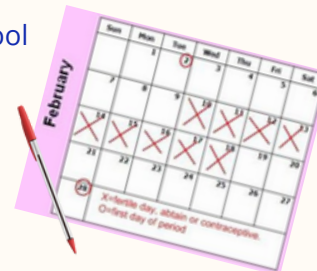
Also known as the fertility awareness method, the rhythm method involves tracking the person's menstrual cycle to avoid sexual intercourse during fertile days. To use this method, the person must record or mark on a calendar when their period starts; this is considered the first day of the menstrual cycle. 12-16 days after ovulation will occur. Using this method, a woman is able to predict when she is ovulating. For this method to be effective, the person must be abstinent during the ovulation period of roughly 12-24 hours and the days leading up to ovulation. This is because although the egg will only survive 24 hours, sperm can remain viable in a woman's body for up to 5 days, leading to possible fertilization days after ovulation.

### Risks & Limitations

According to Cleveland Clinic, the rhythm method is only effective 75% of the time. This method can be reliable if the person is effectively consistent in tracking their cycle and remaining abstinent during fertile periods. This can be risky due to it only being a prediction and can be difficult for those who have irregular periods. The rhythm method alone also does not protect against sexually transmitted infections. Remaining abstinent also may prove difficult for some people.

### Benefits

- No cost or prescription needed
- Increases awareness of one's cycle
- No side effects
- Not irreversible
- Can also be a useful tool to become pregnant



## Intrauterine Device- Copper IUD

### How does it work?

An intrauterine device or IUD is a plastic and copper device, most often in a 'T' shape, which is placed within a woman's uterus to stop eggs and sperm from surviving within the fallopian tubes and womb. The copper IUD is inserted through the woman's cervix into her uterus. The IUD slowly releases copper, which is toxic to the egg and sperm. The copper particles decrease mitochondrial activity in the sperm, ultimately stopping the interaction between the two gametes. The copper also has inflammation effects within the uterus, which causes fluid toxic to sperm and eggs to be released and thicker mucus to form, making it more difficult for sperm to penetrate.



### Risks & Limitations

Implantation of intrauterine devices is known to cause extreme pain for many women. Other side effects from the procedure include light-headedness and nausea, as well as heavy and longer periods. There is also a small chance the IUD could damage the walls of the uterus and/or cause infection. IUDs are also able to fall out or become dislodged. There is a 1% chance of falling pregnant with an IUD; however, if this does occur, it can cause an ectopic pregnancy, which is where the fertilized egg implants outside the uterus. This contraceptive device also does not protect against STIs.

### Benefits

- Known to be highly effective (99%+)
- Can last up to 5-10 years
- No hormonal side effects
- Not irreversible
- Works immediately
- Doesn't interrupt intercourse
- Doesn't affect other medications
- No need for abstinence



# Mechanical Barriers- Condoms & Diaphragms



## How does it work?

Mechanical barriers create a physical barrier between the sperm and the egg. Male condoms are the most popular contraceptive device. Male and female condoms are sheaths of either latex or plastic put on an erect penis or inside the vagina. Diaphragms are also mechanical contraceptive devices. Diaphragms are shallow domes made from silicone with a flexible rim, they are placed inside the vagina specifically on the cervix. It is held in place by the pubic bone and pelvic muscles.

## Risks & Limitations

When used correctly condoms are 98% effective. however they are able to rip or tare making them ineffective if they are not used correctly. Male condoms may also slip of during intercourse causing sperm to enter the vagina. The penis must also be withdrawn before the erection is lost to ensure the condom does not slip off. Female condoms have a higher failure rate than male condoms and can cause more discomfort. Diaphragms may move out of place during intercourse. Condoms and diaphragms may also interrupt intercourse.

## Benefits

- Prevent STI's
- Easily accessible
- Affordable
- Reliable when used correctly
- Little to no side effects
- Only needed during intercourse



# Hormonal Contraceptives- The Patch & The progestogen Pill



## How does it work?

The birth control patch releases progestogen and estrogen hormones into the women's body that prevent ovulation. The patch is placed on the body once every week for three weeks. During the forth week the patch is removed to allow for menstruation. The pill, also known as the mini pill similarly releases progestogen hormones into the women's body. both the patch and the pills hormone's cause the mucus produced in the cervix to thicken making it harder for sperm to reach the egg. the hormones can also make it harder for a fertilized egg to attach to the uterine wall.

## Risks & Limitations

Hormonal birth control has a very long list of side effects and limitations. those who take the pill or wear the patch must follow a very strict schedule when taking or applying it respectively. if not applied at the correct time or day the contraceptive device will render useless of less effective. The changes in hormones can cause irregular bleeding, mood swings, nausea, sever headaches, blood clotting, heightened risk of heart attack, skin irritation, increased likelihood of cancer and much more.

## Benefits

- High reliability when used correctly
- No interruption during intercourse
- Regular periods
- Can reduce acne

