

# Cystic Fibrosis & Your Reproductive Health



## Can I take birth control if I have cystic fibrosis (CF)?

Yes! There are many birth control methods patients with CF can use.

- **Barrier methods** include:
  - **Condoms** (**BONUS!** Condoms also protect against sexually transmitted infections)
  - **Diaphragms** (must be fitted during a pelvic exam)
- **Hormonal methods** include:
  - **The pill** (there are many different kinds/brands)
    - You take the pill every day
    - Can make your menstrual period shorter, lighter, and less painful
  - **The patch** (a few different kinds)
    - Like a band-aid -- you put on your skin and change once a week
    - Can make your menstrual period shorter, lighter, and less painful
  - **The vaginal ring** (a few different kinds)
    - A soft flexible ring that is inserted like a tampon, and is changed once a month
    - Can make your menstrual period shorter, lighter, and less painful
  - **The shot** ("Depo")
    - A shot that your healthcare provider gives you once every 3 months
    - Can make your menstrual period irregular, more or less frequent, and usually lighter and less painful
  - **The implant**
    - A small rod (about the size of a matchstick) that is placed under your skin in your upper arm, can last 3-5 years
    - Can make your menstrual period irregular, and usually lighter and less painful
  - **The intrauterine device (IUD)**
    - A T-shaped device that is inserted by your healthcare provider into your uterus during a pelvic exam
    - The hormonal IUD lasts 3-8 years, and depending on the dose, can make your periods much lighter, less frequent, and less painful
- **Non-hormonal IUD**
  - **The Copper IUD** lasts 10-12 years
  - Can make your periods a bit heavier, but has no hormones

Hormonal methods can affect people with CF differently, but they are still safe.

There are members of your medical care team that can help you understand the different forms of birth control and the best option for you! Ask your CF care team, adolescent/young adult medicine specialist or gynecologist to help you.

### **Will birth control interact with my CF medications?**

Some hormonal birth control methods, like the pill, may not work as well when taken with certain antibiotics or medications. An extra form of protection, such as condoms, may be needed. Your care team can help you with this as well. Also, if you take Orkambi®, hormonal contraceptives do not work well to prevent pregnancy. In that case, it's best to use a non-hormonal contraceptive, such as the Copper IUD and condoms.

### **Am I able to have children?**

Many people with CF can have successful pregnancies. A few factors that can determine if a pregnancy will be healthy or not in people with CF include:

- lung function
- nutrition
- CF-related diabetes
- liver disease

Planning your pregnancy in advance can help to make sure you are in the best health possible. Planning ahead will also lower the chances of complications related to pregnancy and childbirth.

### **If I have children, could they also have CF?**

People with CF can pass it on to their children, but it depends on both parents' genes. Testing can be done to inform parents of their chances of having a child with CF.

**For more information about cystic fibrosis and your sexual and reproductive health, please visit:**

**Cystic Fibrosis  
Foundation**



**Bedsider**



### **How to use a QR code:**

1. Open your phone's camera.
2. Focus on the QR code.
3. A link will appear on the screen after a few seconds.
4. Tap on the link. This will open the website on your browser.
5. If nothing happens, type the web address into your phone's browser:
  - a. Cystic Fibrosis Foundation: <https://www.cff.org/managing-cf/family-planning>
  - b. Bedsider: <https://www.bedsider.org>