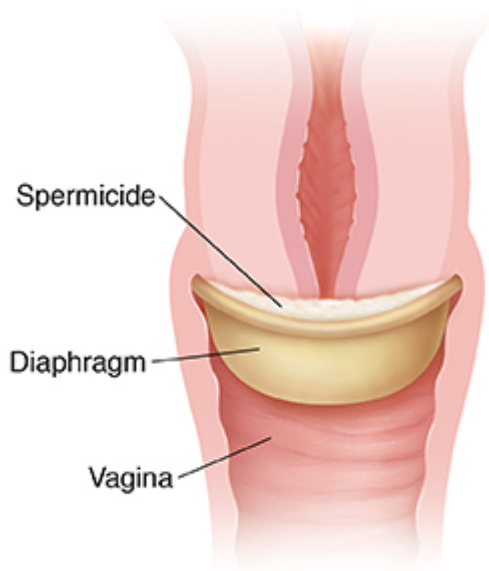


Birth Control: Diaphragm and Cervical Cap



The diaphragm and the cervical cap are cup-shaped devices that are inserted into the vagina. They protect against pregnancy by covering the cervix. They keep sperm from entering the uterus to meet the egg.



Pregnancy rates

Talk with your healthcare provider about the effectiveness of this birth control method.

Using the diaphragm or cervical cap

- These devices must be fitted and prescribed by a healthcare professional. You will be instructed on how to insert them.
- These devices must be used with spermicides, which are creams, foams, or gels that kill sperm.
- The diaphragm can be inserted up to 2 hours before sex and the cervical cap up to 6 hours before sex.
- The diaphragm can be left in place for up to 24 hours and the cervical cap for up to 48 hours.

Pros

- Provides birth control right away
- Can be inserted ahead of time
- Easy to stop if you decide you want to become pregnant
- May protect against certain sexually transmitted infections (STIs), but not HIV, the virus that causes AIDS

Cons

- Requires planning ahead

- May be hard for some women to insert
- May increase the risk of urinary tract infection (UTI) or toxic shock syndrome (TSS), a rare but serious disorder caused by toxins released by certain bacteria
- Must be left in place for 6 to 8 hours after sex
- Cervical cap can't be used during your period
- Cervical cap is significantly less effective for a woman who has given birth

The diaphragm or cervical cap may not be for you

The diaphragm or cervical cap may not be for you if:

- You're allergic to all spermicides
- You can't reach your cervix or insert the device correctly
- You aren't willing to plan ahead or interrupt sex to use it

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