

How Birth Control Works



Birth control prevents pregnancy by preventing conception. Some methods prevent an egg from maturing. Some keep the sperm and egg from meeting. And some methods work in both ways.

Preventing ovulation

Certain hormones help prevent an egg from maturing and being released. Hormone methods include:

- Birth control pills
- Skin patches
- Contraceptive vaginal rings
- Injections

Preventing sperm and egg from meeting

Methods that prevent the sperm and egg from joining include:

- Barrier methods, such as the condom, the diaphragm, and the cervical cap
- Spermicide
- The IUD (intrauterine device)
- Sterilization
- Natural family planning
- Some types of hormone methods

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