

Frequently Asked Questions on Family Planning/ Childbirth Spacing Methods

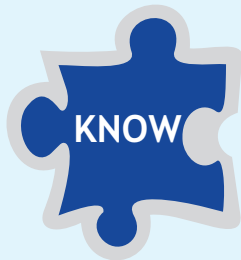
BE WISE!
See Your Family Planning Provider.
Make a Choice Now!



*The right method is the
one that suits you*



To access family planning/childbirth spacing services;
Visit your nearest Family Planning Provider Network (FPPN) member; Health Facilities, Pharmacies, Patent Medicine Vendors/Chemists with this sign



Know the Facts
About Family Planning



Talk to your Partner
About Family Planning



Go for
Family Planning



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Get it together
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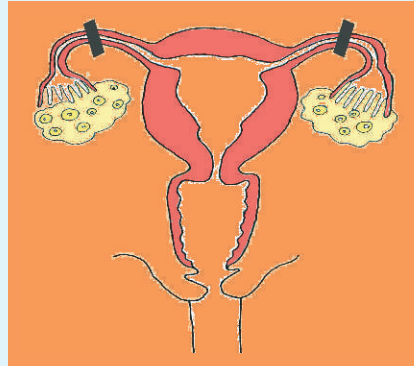
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Tubal Ligation

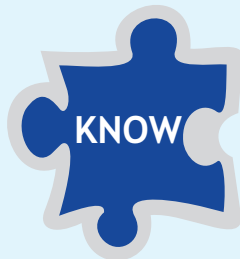
What is tubal ligation?

Tubal ligation is a method of permanent contraception for women who do not want to get pregnant again. Tubal ligation is a procedure in which a trained provider blocks the tubes that carry the eggs to the uterus.



Correct facts about tubal ligation:

- **Tubal ligation is safe for women.** It does not cause lasting pain in the back, uterus or abdomen
- **Tubal ligation has no side effects.** Tubal ligation does not cause hormonal imbalances or change women's menstrual cycles. Also it does not cause any changes in weight, appetite, or appearance
- **A woman is as strong after tubal ligation as she was before.** It does not make women weak
- **Neither a woman's uterus nor ovaries are removed.** Tubal ligation does not remove a woman's uterus or ovaries nor does it lead to a need to have them removed
- **Tubal ligation does not cause cancer**
- **Women have the same sex drive as they had before.** Tubal ligation does not change women's sex drive.



**Modern family methods are safe and effective.
The right method is the one that suits you.**

What is Family Planning/Childbirth Spacing?

- It is a way of life; an informed decision by an individual or a couple as to when to start having children and how much time in between births
- It promotes quality of life for the entire family
- It is an affordable, safe and effective way to have children when a couple wants to have them
- It includes helping couples who may be having infertility problems have children.

What are the benefits of Family Planning/Childbirth Spacing?

To Mothers:

- Allows her to rest between pregnancies in order to regain her health and strength so that she will reduce the risk of complications during or after pregnancy
- She will have time to be able to develop herself and contribute financially to her upkeep and her family
- It allows her to give more attention to her husband and love him more
- Mothers will have less anxiety and stress
- By delaying the next pregnancy, she is able to spend quality time with each child
- She will be able to breast feed for a longer period, thus providing her baby with nutritious food and protection from diseases.

To Fathers:

- Able to provide for the family including financial needs
- Fathers will have less anxiety and stress
- Able to spend quality time with family
- Better able to fulfill a father's role of giving guidance and support to his children
- Have quality time for his wife. This promotes a closer relationship between them.

To Children:

- Feel loved as parents are able to give them good care and more attention
- Will not have to work to support the parents
- Better health and education opportunities.



What modern Family Planning/Childbirth spacing methods are available in Nigeria?

- Pills (including the minipill for nursing mothers)
- Injectables (taken every 2 or 3 months, depending on the type selected)
- Implant
- Intra-Uterine Device (IUD)
- Male Condom
- Female Condom
- Exclusive Breastfeeding Method (LAM)
- Tubal Ligation (BTL - permanent method for women)
- Vasectomy (permanent method for men).

Do some Family Planning/Childbirth spacing methods have side effects?

Yes. Some of the modern methods have side effects. Side effects are not signs of illness. **Some women do not have them at all.** Most side effects become less or stop within the first year. A client should go back to her provider for help if the side effects bother her.

Does Family Planning/Childbirth spacing cause infertility?

No. For some methods, return to fertility is soon after method is removed or discontinued while for others there might be some delay. In time, the woman will be able to become pregnant.

What is the best method of contraception?

There isn't a best method of contraception. There are different reasons for using FP. Some families use FP to space their children and some do not want any more children. **The best method is the one that suits you.** See your health provider to make the choice that best suits you.

Can Family Planning/Childbirth spacing methods fail?

Yes. However, if a FP method fails, it **could be because it is not used correctly.** This can be if a person does not use a condom every time or if a person misses pills for too many days.

Is it possible to combine more than one method of Family Planning/Childbirth spacing?

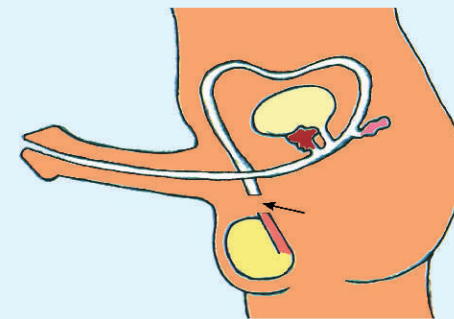
Yes. However this decision should be based on discussions with your provider. For example, people may use the pill and wear condoms to protect against both pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) including HIV.



Vasectomy

What is vasectomy?

Vasectomy is permanent contraception for men who do not want any more children. In vasectomy, a trained provider performs a procedure that blocks the tubes carrying sperm from the testicles. The testicles remain in place.



Correct facts about vasectomy:

- **Vasectomy is safe for men.** It does not cause any diseases later in life
- **A man is just as strong after vasectomy as before.** It does not cause a man to grow fat or become weak, less masculine or less productive
- **Vasectomy does not cause cancer**
- **Men have the same sex drive after vasectomy as they had before.** A vasectomy does not remove the testicles and does not affect sexual function. A man's erection is as hard, lasts as long and he ejaculates as he did before.



Share the correct information from this booklet with your friends and neighbours.

Emergency Contraceptive Pills

What are Emergency Contraceptive Pills (ECPs)?

- ECPs are tablets which can prevent pregnancy when taken up to 72 hours after sexual exposure
- ECPs should be taken as soon as possible after unprotected sex. The sooner they are taken after sex, the better they prevent pregnancy
- ECPs are for emergencies and not appropriate for regular use. They should not be taken more than twice a month. There is increased risk of ECP failure if repeatedly used as a contraceptive. Couples should discuss a family planning method with their provider.



Where can a woman find ECPs?

ECPs are available in health facilities and pharmacies.

What are side effects of ECPs?

Some women experience:

- Changes in menstrual patterns
- Nausea
- Abdominal pain
- Headache

This is normal.

Correct facts about the ECPs:

- **Using ECP is not a Family Planning method.** To stay protected from pregnancy, couples should visit a provider for a FP method
- **ECPs are safe for women.** ECPs are not dangerous to a woman's health
- **A woman can become pregnant immediately after taking ECPs.** Taking ECPs prevents pregnancy only from acts of sex that took place in the few days before. They will not protect a woman from pregnancy from acts of sex **after** she takes the ECPs- not even on the very next day.



Male and Female Condoms

What are male and female condoms?

They are rubber sheaths used on the penis (Male Condom) or inside the vagina (Female Condom) and act as a barrier to prevent the sperm from meeting the female egg during sex. Condoms protect couples from unintended pregnancy and STIs including HIV.



My friend says that condoms are dangerous to use because they break. Is he right?

No. Condoms are not dangerous to use. They are safe when used correctly. Condoms do break occasionally, but this is unlikely if you handle them carefully, store them properly and don't cut them with your fingernails or jewelry. Using more than one condom does not offer additional protection and could lead to friction causing it to break. Condoms require correct use with every act of sex for greatest effectiveness.

Do condoms expire?

Yes. That is why you must check the expiry date before you use a condom. If expired, a condom has an increased risk of breaking.

Do condoms interfere with pleasure from sex?

Some couples say there is a different sensation when using condoms. However, sex with a condom can cause more pleasure because then the users are not worried about pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections including HIV.

Are some condoms better than other condoms?

Registered condom brands available in Nigeria are safe and effective. They have been certified by safety and regulatory bodies.

Correct facts about male and female condoms:

- **Are used by married and unmarried couples**
- **Men have the same sex drive if they use condoms.** Condoms do not make men sterile, impotent or weak
- **Are safe for men and women.** They do not cause illness. A woman does not need sperm to be healthy. Condoms cannot get lost in a woman's body
- **Protect against HIV transmission.** They do not have holes that HIV can pass through.

IUD

What is the IUD?

The Intra-Uterine Device or IUD method prevents pregnancy for 5-10 years. The IUD is inserted in a woman's uterus by a trained provider. IUDs are safe for breastfeeding women to use.



What are side effects of IUD?

Some women can have changes in menstrual patterns, especially in the first 3 to 6 months. These could be prolonged and heavy bleeding, irregular bleeding or cramps during monthly bleeding. These side effects are normal and become less over time.

Can a woman who has an infection use the IUD?

No. Women with an infection cannot use the IUD until they are proven free of any infection.

What is the best time to have an IUD?

An IUD can be fitted at any time by a provider. After a vaginal delivery, an IUD can be fitted within 48 hours of delivery or after 6 weeks. After a caesarean section, the IUD can be inserted after 6 weeks.

Can IUDs cause cancer?

No, IUDs do not cause cancer.

Can the IUD come out on its own?

Yes, if not inserted properly or if the woman has a problem. If a woman is concerned about whether her IUD is in place, she can check for the string in her vagina or see a provider.

Can a woman in a polygamous home use IUD to prevent infection from the other wives through the husband?

No. IUD does not offer protection from sexually transmitted infections.

Correct facts about IUDs:

- **IUDs are safe for women.** But they must be inserted by a trained provider
- **The IUD stays in the uterus.** It does not move to the heart or brain
- **A woman can return to fertility after IUD removal.** IUDs do not make women infertile. IUDs do not cause birth defects in any children after removal
- **IUDs do not interfere with sex.** IUDs do not cause discomfort for the woman during sex. A man can not feel the IUD during sex.

Injectables

What is the injectable?

The injectable is a method in which a woman gets an injection every 2 or 3 months, depending on the type of injectable.

What are side effects of the injectable?

Some women experience:

- Changes in menstrual patterns (could be irregular- prolonged, frequent or no menstruation)
- Weight gain
- Dizziness
- Headache

This is normal.



I am breastfeeding, can I use the injectable?

The injectable is safe for breastfeeding women to use once their infant is more than six weeks old.

Correct facts about injectables:

- **Injectables are safe for women.** Blood is not building up inside the woman. If a woman is concerned, she can ask her provider
- **Injectables will not affect a woman's fertility after stopping use.** However, it could take a few months before a woman becomes pregnant after her last injection.



Make sure you keep your appointments and return to your family planning provider as recommended.

Implants

What are implants?

Implants are small plastic rods which are inserted in a woman's arm and can prevent pregnancy for 3-5 years.

What are side effects of implants?

Some women experience:

- Changes in menstrual patterns (could be irregular-prolonged, frequent or no menstruation).
- Weight change
- Mood change
- Breast tenderness
- Dizziness
- Headache

This is normal.

Do implants increase weight?

Some women gain weight.

Do implants increase blood pressure?

No. Using implants does not increase blood pressure.

What happens if a woman dies and she happens to be using implants or IUD? Is it OK for her to be buried with the device?

Using implants or IUD does not prevent anyone from going to heaven. If the woman dies while using any FP method, she can be buried.

Is the mode of insertion of implants a surgical operation, will I feel pain?

An injection is given to numb the insertion site so you do not feel pain. The woman may feel some pressure during the insertion and her arm may be sore afterwards for a few days. The soreness will go away without treatment.

Correct facts about implants:

- **Implants are safe for women.** Blood is not building up inside the woman
- **Implants stop releasing hormones once they are removed from the arm.** Implants can be removed anytime the woman is ready to conceive. After implant removal, hormones do not remain in a woman's body. Generally a woman returns to her fertility quickly after implant removal but some women have to wait for a few months
- **Implants stay in the arm until they are removed.** Implants do not move to other parts of the body.



Pills

What is the Pill?

A small tablet a woman takes at the same time every day to prevent pregnancy. The pill must be taken every day, whether or not a woman has sex that day.

What are side effects of the pill?

Some women have:

- Changes in monthly menstrual patterns
- Headaches
- Weight change
- Breast tenderness

This is normal.

Do the pills cause abdominal pains?

Pills do not cause abdominal pain. In fact, pills have been shown to reduce menstrual pains.

I am thinking of trying the pill. Is it dangerous for women?

Most women can use pills safely and effectively, but it is not for all women. On your first visit to a family planning provider, he or she will ask you about your smoking habit and any family history of heart or blood disease or high blood pressure.

Does the pill turn women off sex?

No. Pills do not affect a woman's sexual drive. For many women, their interest in sex increases because they know the pill is giving them excellent protection against unwanted pregnancy.

What happens if I forget to take my pill for one day?

If you missed just 1 pill, take it as soon as you remember. Continue taking 1 pill each day at your normal time. This might mean taking 2 pills on the same day (1 when you remember and the other at the regular time). However, if you remember at your normal time, you need to take 2 pills at once.



Will I get pregnant if I miss one pill

Missing one pill will not lead to unintended pregnancy, but missing up to 3 or more in a month is a cause for concern. If a woman misses pills frequently, she should consider switching to a different method.

Correct facts about pills and minipills:

- **They are safe for women.** Pills do not build up in a woman's body. Women do not need to rest from taking the pills
- **Pills dissolve in a woman's stomach when she takes them.** Pills do not collect in the stomach
- **A woman can return to fertility (her ability to get pregnant) when she stops taking the pill.** Pills do not make women infertile
- **A woman has the same sex drive if she's taking the pill.** Pills do not change a woman's sexual drive
- **Minipills are safe for breastfeeding women and their babies.** Minipills do not cause a breastfeeding woman's milk to dry up. Minipills do not cause diarrhea in breastfed babies.



Return to your family planning provider any time if you:

- Have questions or problems
- Experience side effects that persist and bother you.

Exclusive Breastfeeding Method

What is exclusive breastfeeding method (LAM)?

Exclusive breastfeeding method is based on the fact that if a woman exclusively breastfeeds for the first six months after childbirth, she is protected from pregnancy. This method is highly effective, but a woman **MUST** meet **ALL 3** criteria to prevent pregnancy;

1. Mothers menstrual period has not returned, AND
2. Baby feeds exclusively on breastmilk on demand, day and night (no water) AND
3. Baby is less than 6 months old.



What are the side effects of LAM?

There are **no** side effects.

Can someone else give my baby water while I am practicing LAM?

If a breastfeeding baby is fed water by anyone, then the mother is no longer protected against pregnancy using LAM. She should find another FP method.



Share the correct information from this booklet with your partner.