



Student Wellness Centre

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UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN

Student Health Plan Insurance covers 80% of costs for most contraceptives and some costs of emergency contraception.

Talk to a healthcare provider about what is right for you. Did you know that you can book an appointment with a Student Wellness Centre nurse, just to talk about your Sexual Wellness Plan?

Oral Contraceptives (“The Pill”)



What Is It and How It Works?

The pill contains both estrogen and progestin that is taken orally. Progestin-only pills (“mini-pill”) can be prescribed to people who can’t take estrogen.

Effectiveness: 99.7 %

Cost \$143/year

Advantages

- Simple to take,

- Can regulate periods, decrease cramping,
- May help improve acne, and
- Some are suited for continuous use. This means taking the pills without stopping.

Disadvantages

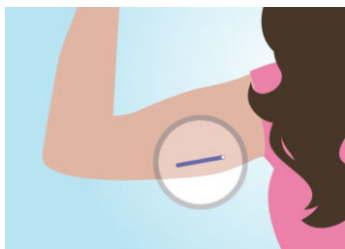
- Taken every day around the same time,
- Side effects include irregular bleeding/spotting, nausea, bloating, breast tenderness, and headaches,
- Increased risks for people over the age of 35 and people that smoke,
- May increase the risk of blood clots, and
- Does not protect against STIs

Birth Control Methods

- **Hormonal:** Changes hormone levels in the body that prevents ovulation, fluids in the cervix and/or implementation in the uterus (Prevents the ovaries from releasing an egg).
- **Intrauterine Contraception (IUD):** -
Copper: Acts as an irritant in the uterus and prevents the sperm from fertilizing the egg - Hormonal: releases a small amount of progestin each day to prevent pregnancy.

- **Barrier:** Prevents semen from entering the vagina using a barrier.
- **Fertility Awareness-Based:** Understanding your monthly fertility pattern can help you plan to get pregnant or avoid getting pregnant.
- **Permanent:** Sterilization through tubal ligation or vasectomy.
- **Emergency Contraception:** Urgent method of pregnancy prevention after unprotected sex. Use emergency contraception within 72 hours. Remember, it is NOT 100% effective.

Implant (Nexaplanon)



What is it and How it works?

The implant is a soft flexible plastic rod the size of a matchstick that is placed under the skin under the arm for up to 3 years. Nexplanon contains a hormone called etonogestrel that prevents ovulation.

Effectiveness: 99.5%

Cost: \$341/3 years

Advantages:

- Low maintenance and long acting
- Inserted and removed by a health professional.
- Less likely to cause weight gain or mood swings

Disadvantages:

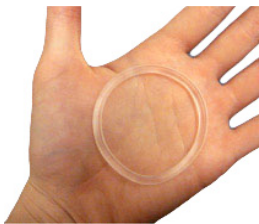
Side effects include spotting or irregular periods

Does not protect against STIs

Things to Consider

- If you don't see yourself wanting to get pregnant within a year, consider a long term birth control method: Implant, IUD or IUS. It can be taken out any time; a day later, a month later, whenever.
- Abstinence, though not technically a form of birth control, can be up to 100% effective in preventing pregnancy and STIs. Abstinence has different meanings to different people. Define what it means to you.

Vaginal Contraceptive Ring (NuvaRing)



What Is It and How It Works? A flexible ring containing estrogen and progestin that is inserted into the vagina. These hormones get slowly released. Pregnancy is prevented by inhibiting the ovaries from releasing an egg. The ring stays in the vagina for three weeks; then removed for one week

Effectiveness: 99.7%

Cost: \$195/year

Advantages

- Makes periods more regular, lighter, and shorter,
- It does not interfere with intercourse, and
- For extended and continuous use, users can insert a new ring every three weeks.

Disadvantages

- Side effects may include spotting/irregular bleeding, nausea, breast tenderness, and headaches,
- May cause vaginal discomfort or irritation,

- Does not protect against STIs.
- Consider all the facts before deciding on a form of birth control. Review these and other possible options with a healthcare provider and your partner(s) when deciding which is right for you. Ask lots of questions.
- If your contraception method has failed, consult your health professional immediately and begin taking emergency contraception. Consider getting a prescription in advance as a precaution.

Intrauterine System, IUS (Kyleena or Mirena)



What Is It and How It Works?

A T-shaped device that sits inside the uterus and contains the hormone levonorgestrel. It can be left in place for up to five years. The IUS is inserted and removed by a healthcare provider.

Effectiveness: 99.8 %

Cost: \$63/year

Advantages

- It does not contain estrogen.
- May decrease menstrual bleeding and cramping. Some people may stop having periods.
- May decrease pain from endometriosis.

Disadvantages

- Possible side effects after insertion include: irregular bleeding/spotting, acne, headaches, breast tenderness, and possibly light or no menstrual periods.
- Rare side effects include: perforation of the uterus may occur at the time of insertion, infection, and expulsion (may fall out) in about 6% of people
- Does not protect against STIs.

Qualities of a Healthy Relationship

- ✓ **Safety**
- ✓ **Honesty**
- ✓ **Accepting**
- ✓ **Respectful**
- ✓ **Enjoyment**
- ✓ **Equality**
- ✓ **Good Communication**
- ✓ **Similar Values and Beliefs**

More information on this in SWC's
Healthy Relationships pamphlet

Intrauterine Device, IUD



What Is It and How It Works?

A T-shaped device that contains copper and sits inside the uterus for up to five years. It is inserted and removed by a health care provider.

Effectiveness: 99.8 %

Cost: \$12/year

Advantages

- It is effective and long-acting,
- It contains no hormones,
- It is reversible, and
- It can also be used as **emergency contraception** if inserted within 5 days after unprotected sex.

Disadvantages

- IUDs may increase menstrual bleeding or menstrual cramping,
- Perforation of the uterus may occur at the time of insertion (but rare),
- May fall out in 2-10 % of people,

- Side effects may include irregular bleeding or spotting, and
- Does not protect against STIs.

Emergency Contraception

Emergency contraception (EC, ‘the morning after pill’) is used to prevent a pregnancy **after unprotected sex or when contraception has failed. Does not protect against STIs.**

There are 3 forms of EC available in Canada, and each work differently:

- Levonorgestrel (e.g. Plan B, Next Choice) ~\$20
- Ulipristal Acetate (Ella), ~\$42.35
- Copper Intrauterine Device (Cu-IUD; e.g. Liberte, Mona Lisa) ~\$70-140

EC are intended for emergency use only, not in place of regular birth control. The best way to prevent unintended pregnancy or STD’s is to use effective birth control correctly and consistently.

Male and Female Condoms



What Is It and How It Works?

A disposable sheath that fits over the erect penis or inside the vagina that prevents semen from entering the vagina. Condoms are usually latex, but non-latex are available. A new condom must be used for each act of intercourse.

Effectiveness: 85-98 %

Cost: \$83 (male), \$332 (female)/year

Advantages

- Latex condoms help protect against most STIs,
- Available without a prescription.

Disadvantages

- Requires knowledge and practice of proper use,
- Must be available at time of intercourse,
- May slip or break,
- May reduce sensitivity for either partner
- Must be stored and handled properly.

Additional Resources

Visit these great sites:

- sexandu.ca
- Itsaplan.ca
- plannedparenthood.org
- sexualhealthcentresaskatoon.ca
- MedlinePlus.gov/languages
provides health information in
other languages

Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy: 306-668-2256

wellness.usask.ca

Depo-Provera (“The Shot”)

What Is It and How It Works

A hormone (progestin) injection that is given in the arm or buttocks every 12-13 weeks. A prescription is required. The injection is given by a health care provider. It prevents ovaries from releasing an egg, thickens the cervical mucus, and causes changes in uterus lining. Periods may stop altogether.

Effectiveness: 99 %

Cost: \$108/year

Advantages

- Up to 97-99.7 % effective in preventing pregnancy,
- Injections only occur 4 times per year,
- It is reversible and does not contain estrogen,
- It can be used by people who cannot take “the pill,” and
- Improves symptoms of endometriosis.

Disadvantages

- Symptoms may include: irregular bleeding, decrease in bone density, depression, and weight gain and
- May take up to nine months after the last injection for fertility to return.