**Contraception**

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| **METHOD** | **HOW IT WORKS** | **RELIABILITY** | **ADVANTAGES** | **DISADVANTAGES** |
| **Condom** | Condoms are a simple form of contraception available to both men and women. Condoms are a very fine sheath made of rubber or plastic that is designed to act as a physical barrier to stop bodily fluids from mixing during sexual activity. Condoms can be used for vaginal, anal, or oral sex as contraceptives or in reducing the risk of getting or spreading an STI. Male condoms are rolled onto an erect penis whilst female condoms are inserted into the vagina or anus. You may use either one, but not both as this will cause friction which could cause a break or a slip for both. | Condoms work well if applied and used correctly. Incorrect usage of a condom may lead to unintended pregnancy.  Condoms can be used in conjunction with other contraceptive measures, such as pills, vaginal rings, implants and IUDS to provide more effective contraception and prevent STIs at the same time.  Male condoms are 98% effective with perfect use. Almost 18% of women still get pregnant using condoms, generally because the condoms are not used properly. Female condoms are 95% effective with perfect use. About 20% of women will still get pregnant using a female condom, usually because the condom is not used properly. Condoms can break or come off during sex, and are also perishable – they must be stored in a cool place and used before expiry. They must also not be used with oil-based lubricants as this could cause the condom to break. | The main advantages of using condoms include:   * They are safe to use * They are small and easy to carry * They’re very accessible * They are able to protect against STIs as well as unwanted pregnancy | The main disadvantages of using condoms include:   * They can only be used once * They are perishable, and must be kept in a cool place and used by expiry date * Male condoms can only be used with water-base lubricant * Female condoms can be tricky to insert and remove |
| **IUD** | The IUD is a small contraceptive device that is placed inside the uterus, and there are two kinds. The copper IUD is a small plastic device with copper wrapped around its stem. The progestogen IUD is a small T-shape device with a cylinder containing progestogen around its stem. The IUD affects sperm movement and survival in the uterus so that they cannot reach the egg to fertilise it. The IUD also changes the endometrium is that it’s not suitable for pregnancy. | The IUD is 99.8% effective in preventing pregnancy. | Both the copper and progestogen IUD have the following benefits:   * Effective long-term contraception (min 5 years) * Easy to maintain, you can’t forget to use it like the pill * It is cheaper than other contraception in the long term * You can try for pregnancy immediately following removal * - The progestogen IUD has the added benefit of reducing menstrual bleeding | Both the copper and the progestogen IUD have the following disadvantages:   * The IUD may expel itself from the uterus, usually during a period. You may not be aware that this has happened and should always check that the string is in place. * Although rare, when an IUD fails and a woman becomes pregnant, it must be removed as soon as possible. An IUD in a pregnant woman increases the risk of miscarriage. * There is a small risk of infection in the three weeks following insertion. * Because pelvic infections can lead to infertility, it is important you be particularly careful about protecting yourself from sexually transmitted infections. * The IUD may perforate the wall of the uterus. This is a very rare occurrence and may happen when the IUD is being inserted. * There is the risk of an ectopic pregnancy (where the fertilised egg implants in the fallopian tubes) when the IUD fails. This is very rare with the copper IUD and even rarer with the progestogen IUD.   The progestogen IUD can also have the following side effects:   * Irregular bleeding or periods are likely in the first three to five months. Eventually you are likely to have very few periods at all. * It may cause a slight increase in the likelihood of vaginal dryness, flushing, headaches, nausea and acne.   The copper IUD may cause your periods to become heavier and more painful. |
| **Diaphragm** | A diaphragm is a shallow, cup-shape made of silicone. In Australia there is one size diaphragm available sold as Caya, and is used with a special gel e.g. Caya Gel. A teaspoon of gel is placed in the cup of the diaphragm, and then the diaphragm is placed inside the vagina, so it covers the cervix. The diaphragm and gel work as a barrier to prevent sperm from passing through the cervix, and it may be inserted 2 hours prior to sex. | When used correctly, every time you have sex, it is 86% effective in preventing a pregnancy. If used incorrectly, e.g. incorrect insertion before sex or removal too soon following sex, it might be only 82% effective. | Advantages of a diaphragm or cap:   * You only need to use a diaphragm or cap when you want to have sex * You can put it in at a convenient time before having sex (use extra spermicide if you have it in for more than 3 hours) * There are usually no serious associated health risks or side effects * You're in control of your contraception | Disadvantages of a diaphragm or cap:   * It's not as effective as other types of contraception, and it depends on you remembering to use it and using it correctly * It doesn't provide reliable protection against STIs * It can take time to learn how to use it * Putting it in can interrupt sex * Cystitis (bladder infection) can be a problem for some women who use a diaphragm or cap * Latex and spermicide can cause irritation in some women and their sexual partners |
| **Rhythm Method** | The rhythm method is a form of natural family planning. This is done by tracking your menstrual history to predict when you’ll ovulate. This helps you determine when you’re most likely to conceive. This can be used to either conceive or be used as a contraceptive measure. This method required careful record keeping and persistence. | The rhythm method has been shown to be one of the least effective forms of birth control. In general, as many as 24 out of 100 women who use this method for birth control become pregnant the first year. This method also does not protect you against STI’s. | * Costs very little * Is safe to use * Requires no medication * Produces no side effects * Can be stopped immediately if you decide you would like to conceive | * You need to consistently track menstrual cycles for 6 months before the method can be considered reliable * You need to abstain from sex or use backup contraception during fertile days * Both partners must be involved * High failure rate |
| **The Pill** | The Pill is a daily tablet (also known as the combined pill or oral contraceptive pill) which contained two hormones; oestrogen and progestogen, similar to those produced by the ovaries. Usually, the Pill with hormones is taken for 21 days and sugar tablets (to gain habit) are taken for 7 days to allow for menstruation. Menstrual bleeding can be stopped by just having the hormone pills. They work by stopping the ovaries from releasing an egg each month, along with thickening the mucus at the cervix to prevent the sperm from entering. | The Pill, if used correctly, is over 99% effective in preventing pregnancy. If you miss a pill, vomit within 2 hours of taking a pill, have severe diarrhoea or take certain medications it might only be 93% effective. | * It can be used to skip your period * Periods usually become lighter, more regular and less painful * Acne can improve * Chance of cancer in the womb or ovaries decrease * Can help with PCOS and endometriosis * Once stopped fertility returns to normal efficiently | Can cause possible side effects including:   * Irregular vaginal bleeding * Nausea * Sore or tender breasts * Headaches * Bloating * Changes to your skin * Mood changes   Other disadvantages include:   * Having to remember a daily tablet |

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