

## 50 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BIRTH CONTROL

1. If you are sexually active, using birth control will lower your risk of pregnancy.

2. Both men and women need to take responsibility for using birth control.

3. There are many safe methods of birth control. Some work better than others to prevent pregnancy.

4. Birth control is most effective if you use it every time you have sex.

5. Birth control is not a guarantee. There is always a small risk of pregnancy.

6. Studies show that for every 100 women who use birth control pills, patches, injections or IUDs for one year, one or two will become pregnant.

7. For every 100 women who use latex condoms or diaphragms for one year, 11 to 17 will become pregnant.

8. Your birth control will be most effective if you always use it correctly.

9. Not having vaginal intercourse is the only way to be sure you or your partner won't become pregnant.

10. Condoms help prevent pregnancy and many give protection from sexually transmitted infections and diseases.

11. Some condoms work better than others at protecting against STIs.

12. Latex and polyurethane condoms prevent the exchange of body fluids that pass some STIs including HIV (the virus that causes AIDS).

13. Lambskin or natural condoms do not help prevent STIs or HIV.



14. For people allergic to latex, condoms made from polyurethane are a good alternative.

15. Female condoms are made of polyurethane and are inserted into the vagina.

16. You can get male or female condoms without seeing a health care provider.

17. Condoms are available at convenience stores, drugstores, clinics, vending machines or you can buy them online.

18. Condoms can deteriorate over time. Store them properly and check the expiration date.

19. Of all the birth control methods, latex condoms used correctly and every time, offer the best protection against STIs.

20. Birth control pills use hormones to prevent pregnancy.

21. Birth control pills need to be taken daily. If a woman forgets to take even one pill, the risk of pregnancy goes up.

22. Other hormone methods include patches, shots, rings and implants.

23. Skin patches are changed once a week for three weeks. No patch is worn on the fourth week when a woman has her period.

24. With the hormonal ring, a woman inserts it into her vagina for three weeks of the month.

25. Hormone shots and implants must be given by a health care provider.

26. Some medications may make these methods less effective and increase the risk of pregnancy.

27. Side effects of hormone methods may include nausea, headache, breast tenderness, weight gain, irregular bleeding and depression.



28. The diaphragm, cervical cap and sponge are barrier methods. They work by covering a woman's cervix so sperm can't reach the egg.

29. The diaphragm and cervical cap are inserted shortly before intercourse and must always be used with a spermicide.

30. The sponge is also inserted into the vagina. It has a spermicide built in.

31. If you get a rash from using spermicide, choose another form of birth control. The rash may increase the risk of becoming infected with HIV or another STI.

32. The IUD is a small device that is placed in a woman's uterus. It contains copper or hormones that prevent pregnancy.

33. Depending on the type, the IUD can be left in for up to 5 or 12 years.

34. Side effects of the IUD may include cramping and heavy periods.

35. Other options include sterilization or using fertility awareness.

36. Having the fallopian tubes tied or blocked are sterilization options for women.

37. Vasectomy is an operation a man can have that will prevent him from getting a woman pregnant.

38. Intra procedures and vasectomies are meant to be permanent. They are choices for people who do not plan to have children later on.

39. Fertility awareness, or natural family planning, is when a woman tracks her menstrual cycle and abstains from intercourse around the time she can become pregnant.

40. Fertility awareness may be a good choice only for couples who are willing to risk a pregnancy.



41. Emergency contraception (Plan B) is an option if your regular birth control failed (like the condom broke).

42. If a woman is raped, she may want emergency contraception to prevent a pregnancy.

43. Emergency contraception must be used within 72 hours of intercourse.

44. Emergency contraception does not work once there is an established pregnancy.



45. Make sure you understand how to use your birth control method - before you have sex.

46. Talking to a health care provider about birth control is a good idea.

47. Talking with your partner about birth control before you become intimate is also a good idea.

48. Say, "I'd like to talk about birth control." If your partner doesn't want to talk, rethink your decision to have sex.

49. You and your partner may want to decide together what type of birth control you will use and who will take responsibility for it.

50. If you don't want to have a baby at this time, using birth control every time you have sex will help prevent pregnancy!

