

# Choosing Your Birth Control Method

Need low or no-cost birth control methods and family planning services?

Family PACT is here to help.

Family  PACT

◆ **All these methods are safe for most people to use.**

Talk with a Family PACT provider about what method is right for you.

◆ **All these methods work well.**

How well they work can depend on you. Some methods work very well no matter what. Some methods work well if you use them the right way every time you have sex.

These percentages show how well each method works for most women even if it isn't used exactly the right way every time. If you use your method the right way every time, it will work even better for you!

◆ **It's your choice!**

Think about how the method would fit in with the way you live.

◆ **Want to protect yourself from HIV and other sexual diseases?**









Use condoms for men, condoms for women, or decide not to have sex at all.










◆ **Had unprotected sex?**

You can still prevent pregnancy. Ask your Family PACT provider about EC Pills.

◆ **Want to find a Family PACT provider near you?**

Call Family PACT at 1-800-942-1054 or go online at [www.familypact.org](http://www.familypact.org) and click on "Clients."

Birth Control Method	How you use it	How well it works	Pros	Cons	Helpful Tips
<b>Long Term Methods:</b> All these methods work very well and are safe and easy to use. None of these methods protect against HIV and other sexual diseases.					
<b>IUD</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health care provider puts it in woman's uterus.</li> <li>Lasts 5 or 10 years.</li> </ul>	99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy-to-use.</li> <li>Few side effects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can cause some cramping for a few minutes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check the string every month.</li> <li>Be sure it is in place.</li> </ul>
<b>Tubal Ligation</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health care provider blocks woman's tubes.</li> <li>Permanent.</li> </ul>	99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Never have to think about birth control.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can't change your mind.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get your signed paperwork done ahead of time.</li> </ul>
<b>Vasectomy</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health care provider blocks the man's tubes.</li> <li>Permanent.</li> </ul>	99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Doesn't change your sex life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can't easily change your mind.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Afterwards, get a sperm count.</li> <li>Use condoms until then.</li> </ul>
<b>Hormonal Methods:</b> All of these methods are for women only and are safe for most women to use. They may cause changes in your period, spotting, bleeding between periods, and other side effects. None will protect you from HIV or other sexual diseases.					
<b>Mini-Pill</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health care provider prescribes it.</li> <li>Woman takes one pill every day.</li> </ul>	92%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy to use.</li> <li>Prevents cramps and heavy bleeding during periods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May have mood changes or other side effects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take the mini-pill at the same time every day.</li> </ul>
<b>Patch</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health care provider prescribes it.</li> <li>Woman puts new patch on each week.</li> </ul>	92%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy to use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May have tender breasts or other side effects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change the patch on the same day of the week for 3 weeks in a row.</li> </ul>
<b>Pill</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health care provider prescribes it.</li> <li>Woman takes one pill every day.</li> </ul>	92%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy to use.</li> <li>Prevents cramps and heavy bleeding during periods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May have nausea or other side effects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take the pill every day at about the same time.</li> </ul>
<b>Ring</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health care provider prescribes it.</li> <li>Woman puts new ring in vagina once a month.</li> </ul>	92%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy to use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May have headaches or other side effects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put in a new ring one week after you take the old ring out.</li> </ul>
<b>Shot</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health care provider gives woman a shot every 3 months.</li> </ul>	97%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy to use.</li> <li>Light periods or no periods at all.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be some bone loss.</li> <li>May have spotting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get a shot every 12 weeks.</li> </ul>

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<b>Barrier Methods:</b> You must use these methods every time you have sex. Only condoms for men and for women help prevent HIV and other sexual diseases. The other barrier methods do not.					
<b>Cap</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman goes to a provider to be fitted.</li> <li>• She uses it every time she has sex.</li> </ul>	68%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use again and again.</li> <li>• Can put it in ahead of time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes practice to learn how to use it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use it with sperm-killing gel or cream.</li> </ul>
<b>Condoms for men</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Man uses a new condom every time he has sex.</li> </ul>	85%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can buy it in a drug store.</li> <li>• Protects you from HIV and other sexual diseases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be allergic to latex.</li> <li>• Can break or slip off.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store your condoms in a cool, dry place.</li> <li>• Use only water-based lubricants.</li> </ul>
<b>Condoms for women</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman uses a new condom every time she has sex.</li> </ul>	79%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can buy it in a drug store.</li> <li>• Protects you from HIV and other sexual diseases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes practice to learn how to put it in.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take your time putting it in.</li> </ul>
<b>Diaphragm</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman goes to a provider to be fitted.</li> <li>• She uses it every time she has sex.</li> </ul>	84%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can put it in ahead of time.</li> <li>• Can be used over again.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes practice to learn how to use it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get re-fitted if you gain or lose more than 20 pounds.</li> </ul>
<b>Shield</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman goes to a provider to get it.</li> <li>• She uses it every time she has sex.</li> </ul>	84%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be used again and again.</li> <li>• Can put it in ahead of time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes practice to learn how to use it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use it with sperm-killing gel or cream.</li> </ul>
<b>Spermicides</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman puts it in her vagina.</li> <li>• She uses it every time she has sex.</li> </ul>	71%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can buy it in a drug store.</li> <li>• Comes in all kinds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be messy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Never use spermicides without condoms.</li> </ul>
<b>Sponge</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman uses a new sponge every time she has sex.</li> </ul>	68%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can put it in ahead of time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard to take out sometimes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have extra sponges on hand.</li> </ul>
<b>Information-Based Methods:</b> You need discipline and commitment to use. Abstinence can protect you from HIV and other sexual diseases, but Fertility Awareness Methods do not.					
<b>Abstinence</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You and your partner decide not to have sex.</li> </ul>	Up to 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can decide not to have sex if you have no other method.</li> <li>• It's free.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May decide to have sex at the last moment and not be protected.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide what you want to do ahead of time.</li> <li>• Talk with your partner about it.</li> </ul>
<b>Fertility Awareness Methods</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn how your body works.</li> <li>• Keep track of your changes.</li> </ul>	75%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good to learn about our bodies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can take time to learn.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking with your partner about it really helps.</li> </ul>