
Your birth control options under the Affordable Care Act

Combination Oral Contraceptives “The Pill”

Combination Oral Contraceptives is a pill you take the same time everyday that releases estrogen and progestin. These hormones stop the ovaries from releasing an egg and thickens the cervical mucus, making it difficult for sperm to reach the egg.

Oral Contraceptives (Progestin-only) “The Mini Pill”

“The mini pill” is similar to “the pill” but does not contain estrogen and releases a lower dose of progestin. The “mini pill” is less effective compared to “the pill” but can be a good alternative for women who have a sensitivity to synthetic estrogen.

IUD (intrauterine device)

The IUD is a T-shaped copper device that is inserted into the uterus and acts as a spermicide. It stops sperm from reaching and fertilizing an egg, and can prevent eggs from attaching to the womb. It's a long-acting reversible contraceptive and can last up to 10 years.

IUS (intrauterine system)

Similar to the IUD, the IUS is a T-shaped device that is inserted into the uterus. However, the IUS releases a hormone called progestogen which thickens the cervical mucus, making it harder for sperm to reach the egg, and thins the lining of the uterus, making it less likely to accept a fertilised egg. The IUS typically lasts 3-5 years.

Progestin Shot/Injection (Depo-Provera)

Depo-Provera is a shot you receive every 3 months that releases the progestin hormone. Similar to “the pill”, progestin stops the ovaries from releasing an egg and thickens the cervical mucus, making it difficult for sperm to reach the egg.

The Patch

This is a skin patch you wear on your buttocks, lower abdomen, upper arm, or upper back. Similar to “the pill”, the patch releases estrogen and progestin. When using the patch, replace every week and skip the 4th week for your period.

Male Condom

This is a thin covering placed over and worn on the erect penis. It keeps the sperm inside the condom to help prevent pregnancy and [STIs](#). Use a new condom every time you have sex.

Female Condom

The female condom is a thin, lubricated pouch that is inserted into the vagina before sex. It helps collect the semen when the man ejaculates. Again, make sure to use a new condom every time.

Implantable Rod

This is a thin rod that is inserted under your skin on your upper arm. The rod releases progestin, stopping the ovaries from releasing an egg and thickening the cervical mucus, making it difficult for sperm to reach the egg. The implantable rod can be used for up to 3 years.

Vaginal Contraceptive Ring

This is a small ring you put into your vagina that releases estrogen and progestin. Again, these hormones stop the ovaries from releasing eggs and thickens the cervical mucus. When using the ring, replace every week and skip the 4th week for your period.

Sterilization Surgery for Women (trans-abdominal surgical sterilization)

During a sterilization surgery, your tubes are tied and cut, called tubal ligation – or your tubes can be sealed with clips, clamps, rings, or an electrical current. This is a permanent form of contraception but can be reversible (for some women) with a surgery that reconnects the fallopian tubes.

Sterilization Implant for Women (Transcervical Tubal Sterilization Implant)

The sterilization implant is a small, metal coil that is put into the fallopian tubes. This device causes scar tissue to form around the coil, blocking the fallopian tubes, and preventing the sperm from reaching an egg.

Sterilization Surgery for Men (Vasectomy)

A vasectomy is a permanent surgery that blocks a man's vas deferens, the tubes that carry sperm from the testes. Vasectomies can be reversible (for some men) and have relatively few complications.

Emergency Contraception (EC)

Emergency contraception is not a regular form of birth control but used if you had sex without birth control or if your regular birth control failed. The emergency contraception pills release progestin and should be taken as soon as possible, within 72 hours of having sex.

Ulipristal Acetate

Ulipristal acetate is a pill that blocks the hormone progesterone. Similar to emergency contraception, it helps prevent pregnancy after a birth control failure or unprotected sex. Ulipristal acetate stops or delays the ovaries from releasing an egg or it can prevent the egg from attaching to the womb. It should be taken as soon as possible, within 120 hours of having sex.