



Sex Protection

It is important to use the best combination of methods in order to prevent something you do not want to happen from happening. Numerous methods together will provide the best protection.

Disease Prevention Methods

The disease/infection prevention methods offer advanced protection from diseases versus most birth control methods. These disease prevention methods keep bodily fluids from mingling during intercourse in order to prevent the contraction of a disease or infection. All of the methods of disease prevention also prevent the likelihood of pregnancy.

- **Condoms:** Condoms are sheaths of rubber-like material that go over the penis and prevent sperm from being released.
Important Notes About Condoms
Polyurethane condoms are less stretchy than latex condoms and more likely to break.
Oil-based lubricants can deteriorate condoms leading to breaks and holes.
Natural condoms do not offer complete protection from STDs.
- **Diaphragms:** Diaphragms are similar to condoms in that they are a protective barrier made out of latex or a similar impermeable material which is inserted into the vagina.
- **Dental Dams:** A dental dam is a thin layer of latex that is placed over an opening to prevent fluids and direct contact.

Birth Control Methods

The goal of birth control is to prevent the fertilization of the female's eggs either through blocking the flow of sperm from the penis into the uterus, through preventing the implantation of the egg into the uterus, or through removal of the fertilized egg/embryo. Birth control methods do very little or nothing to prevent the transmission of diseases.

- **Birth Control (Oral Contraceptive, Injected Contraceptive, Contraceptive Patch):** There is a wide variety of birth control methods, but they all act to regulate female hormone levels in order to prevent the implantation of the egg cell in the uterus.
Important Notes About Birth Control
It is possible to become pregnant even if you consistently take birth control.
Birth control is not effective if you do not strictly follow the dosage and schedule requirements.
- **IUD (Intra-Uterine Device):** The IUD is a device inserted into the uterus that prevents the egg cell from becoming implanted in the uterus.
- **Sterilization (Tubal Ligation / Vasectomy):** With surgery the sex organs are operated on in order to disrupt the flow of either sperm (male) or the egg cell (female).
- **Contraceptive Sponge:** The contraceptive sponge is a specially designed sponge filled with spermicide that is inserted into the uterus in order to prevent movement of the sperm.
- **Emergency Postcoital Contraception (Morning After Pill):** The morning after pill is a dosage of hormones designed to prevent a pregnancy.

Poor Choices of Protection

All of these methods are poor choices on their own and should NEVER be the only type of protection used. However, these methods can be used along with other methods to decrease the likelihood of pregnancy or transmission of diseases.

- **Rhythm Method:** The rhythm method is the process of avoiding a pregnancy by keeping track of a woman's menstruation cycle and having sex during periods when she is less likely to get pregnant. Even during her period, a woman can get pregnant.
- **Withdrawal / Pull-out Method:** This method requires the male to withdraw his penis before the process of ejaculation in order to prevent sperm from being released into the vagina. This doesn't work because sperm can be released without an ejaculation occurring.
- **Anti-Spermicidal Lubricant:** This method uses anti-spermicidal lubricant to prevent sperm from surviving inside the vagina. This method is not consistent enough to be used on its own.