

	CHOICES	HOW OFTEN	YOUR HEALTH	IS IT FOR YOU?
SHORT TERM CONTRACEPTION	 <b>MALE AND FEMALE CONDOMS</b> Barrier methods that can help prevent pregnancy and STIs	Every time you have sex	Male condoms are 99% effective and female condoms are 98% effective with careful and consistent use > No side-effects (unless allergic to latex in the male condom) > Spermicides/lubrication will increase effectiveness and help if vaginal dryness is a problem	Good for single people, or people who don't know if their partner is free from STIs > Female condom can be put in any time before sex > No prescription required > Can be used with hormonal contraceptives for added protection > Female condom may slip during sex
	 <b>COMBINED ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE PILL</b> Tablet contains two female hormones oestrogen and progestogen	Take a pill every day three weeks per month	Over 99% effective if used properly > Can help to control heavy periods and premenstrual symptoms > Not advised for smokers over 35, women who are breast-feeding or those who have medical conditions, such as high blood pressure	Useful for women who can reliably take pills on a daily basis > Vomiting, diarrhoea, antibiotics and some other prescribed drugs can interfere with its effectiveness
	 <b>PROGESTOGEN ONLY PILLS</b> (Mini Pill) Tablet containing only the female hormone progestogen	Take a pill every day	96-99% effective with very careful use > May cause irregular bleeding	Can be used by women who cannot take oestrogen in the combined oral contraceptive pill, such as women over 35 who smoke or breast-feeding mothers > Must be taken at the same time every day > Additional contraception may be required if pills are taken late > Vomiting, diarrhoea, and certain medication can interfere with its effectiveness
	 <b>THE PATCH</b> A patch (similar to a small bandage), which contains the female hormones oestrogen and progestogen	Each patch is worn for seven days, for three consecutive weeks, followed by a patch-free week	99% effective if used properly > Same as for the combined oral contraceptive pill	Useful for women who forget to take their pill daily > May be seen on the skin
	 <b>THE VAGINAL RING</b> The ring contains the female hormones oestrogen and progestogen	Flexible ring inserted by the woman into her vagina for three weeks of every month	99% effective if used properly > Same as for the combined oral contraceptive pill	Useful for women who forget to take their pill daily
	 <b>DIAPHRAGMS / CAPS</b> A flexible rubber or silicone device, used with spermicide, that the woman fits inside her vagina	Every time you have sex > Must stay in place for at least six hours after sex but not more than 30 hours > Fittings should be checked by a doctor every year	92-98% effective with very careful use > Few side-effects as no hormones are needed > Urinary tract infections (cystitis) can be a problem for some users	An initial consultation with the doctor is needed to select the correct size and type > Insertion takes practice > Can be put in any time before sex (if more than three hours before extra spermicide may be needed) > It can be re-used
MEDIUM TERM CONTRACEPTION	 <b>INJECTABLE CONTRACEPTIVE</b> An injection containing the female hormone progestogen	An injection is given approximately every 12 weeks	Over 99% effective once injective is given regularly > May cause irregular bleeding, although bleeding stops completely after 1 year for 50% of users > Cannot be immediately reversed in the event of side effects > May decrease bone density > May protect against cancer of the womb > Side-effects include weight gain, headaches and depression	Can be used by women who cannot take oestrogen in the combined oral contraceptive pill, such as women over 35 who smoke or breast-feeding mothers > Must be given by a health care professional
LONG TERM CONTRACEPTION	 <b>INTRAUTERINE SYSTEM (IUS)</b> A small plastic device, which releases the hormone progestogen, is put into the womb	Lasts approximately five years	99% effective > Reduces or stops heavy bleeding for most women > May cause irregular bleeding > Lasts 5 years > May cause uterine perforation	It is effective immediately > Very reliable long-term, reversible method > Insertion and removal must be done by a specially trained doctor – no anaesthetic is required
	 <b>INTRAUTERINE CONTRACEPTIVE DEVICE (IUCD) – 'THE COIL'</b> A small plastic and copper device is put into the womb to stop the normal actions of the egg and the sperm	Lasts 5-10 years > If inserted after the age of 40 may stay in until the menopause	98-99% effective > May cause uterine perforation	It is effective immediately > Very reliable long-term, reversible method > Insertion and removal must be done by a specially trained doctor – no anaesthetic is required
	 <b>THE IMPLANT</b> Rod containing the female hormone progestogen, which is placed just under the skin on the inside of your upper arm	Rod inserted approximately every three years by a specially trained doctor	99% effective > May reduce painful periods and heavy bleeding > May cause irregular bleeding or stop bleeding altogether > May cause acne or weight gain > May have heavy bleeding and moodiness	Can be used by women who cannot take oestrogen in the combined oral contraceptive pill, such as women over 35 who smoke > Useful for women who forget to take their pill daily
PERMANENT	 <b>FEMALE STERILISATION (TUBAL LIGATION)</b> A surgical procedure that involves cutting or blocking a woman's fallopian tubes	One procedure, usually under general anaesthetic and requiring a short hospital stay	Over 99% effective > There are risks related to surgical complications	Useful for women who have completed their families > It is effective immediately
	 <b>MALE STERILISATION (VASECTOMY)</b> A procedure that involves cutting the tubes carrying sperm, so that sperm are not present in the semen that is ejaculated	One procedure, lasting approximately 15-20 minutes > Can be done in a doctor's surgery or clinic	Over 99% effective > The man can have discomfort and swelling for a short time after the procedure > There are risks related to surgical complications	It is effective after 16 – 20 weeks, if there have been 2 negative sperm counts > Useful for men who have completed their families and who don't need STI protection
NATURAL	 <b>NATURAL METHODS</b> Involves recording the fertile and infertile times of your cycle to plan when to avoid sex or take extra measures to avoid pregnancy	Record body temperature, changes in cervical mucus and other signs of ovulation every day	80-98% effective however depends on careful use and commitment to the method > No side-effects as no hormones or devices are needed > Becomes less reliable as you get older due to cycle changes	Requires keeping a daily record > Needs the cooperation of both partners > Some methods require a few days' abstinence from intercourse each month > Lack of knowledge and events which disturb the woman's cycle e.g. stress, illness, childbirth may make the method less reliable > Natural methods are less reliable for use in older women > Disagreement as to whether natural methods can be safely used during the perimenopause