

Birth Control Methods for Women

Reversible methods of contraception are listed below in order of most effective to least effective. Contraceptive effectiveness is categorized into perfect and typical use.

- **Perfect use** refers to how effective a method is if used correctly every time.
- **Typical use** refers to how effective a method is for those who may not always use it consistently or correctly.

Permanent Contraception

If you know you do not want children or do not want any more children, you might consider sterilization. A family planning provider can give you information and answer questions about sterilization procedures, as well as schedule or refer you for the procedure.

Sterilization

- Sterilization is a ***permanent*** birth control method and should be chosen only if you are sure you do not want a future pregnancy.
- Sterilization does not change a woman's sex drive, her ability to have sex, or orgasm.
- Sterilization procedures are over 99% effective.

There are two (2) types of ***female sterilization*** procedures:

- A ***tubal ligation*** is a surgical procedure that prevents an egg from passing through the fallopian tubes where it could meet sperm.
- An ***implant*** is inserted into the fallopian tubes and creates a blockage to prevent an egg from passing through the tubes.

Sterilization procedures, like a tubal ligation or implant, are available only to clients who are 21 years of age or older.

Abstinence

- Abstinence, not having sex, protects you and your partner from pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.
- You can choose to be abstinent at any time in your life.
- Used continuously, abstinence is 100% effective.

Implant

- The implant is a thin plastic rod that releases a hormone, called progestin, to prevent pregnancy. It works for three years.
- A doctor or nurse practitioner inserts the implant under the skin on the inside of your arm. It can be inserted at a family planning clinic or doctor's office.
- Implants are 99% effective, meaning that 1 or less women in 100 will become pregnant using the implant.

Intrauterine Contraception (IUC)

- **The Sanilac County Health Department makes referrals for the insertion of an IUC.**
- An IUC is inserted into your uterus to prevent pregnancy. You can choose a non-hormonal IUC that lasts up to 10 years or you can choose one with a hormone, call levonorgestrel, that last three (3) years.
- If you decide you want to become pregnant, you can have your IUC removed.
- IUCs are 97-99% effective.

The “Shot”

- You get the birth control shot every three (3) months at a family planning clinic or doctor’s office. The shot contains a hormone, call progestin, to prevent pregnancy.
- The shot is 99.7% effective with perfect use.
- With typical use, the shot is 94% effective.

Birth Control Pills

- Birth control pills contain hormones that prevent you from becoming pregnant. Combined hormonal pills have both estrogen and progestin in them. Mimi pills have only progestin in them.
- You take one birth control pill every day. Pills are small and easy to take. Missing a pill increases your change of pregnancy. The mini pill must be taken at the same time every day.
- If taken perfectly, meaning every day, birth control pills are 99% effective. For the mini pill, perfect use is every day at the same time.
- With typical use, birth control pills are 92% effective.

Birth Control Patch

- The contraceptive patch is a thin, stick-on square that is placed on your body.
- The contraceptive patch releases estrogen and progestin to prevent pregnancy. A new patch is used once a week for three weeks and the fourth week is patch-free.
- The patch is 99% effective with perfect use.
- With typical use, the patch is 91% effective.

Vaginal Ring

- The vaginal ring is a small soft plastic ring that releases estrogen and progestin to prevent pregnancy. You place a new ring in your vagina every month. Your partner will not feel the ring.
- If used perfectly, meaning keeping the ring in place and changing it on time, the ring is 99% effective.
- With typical use, the ring is 91% effective.

Diaphragm

- **The Sanilac County Health Department does not have diaphragms in stock. One would need to be ordered and can be received within two (2) weeks of the order.**
- The diaphragm is a rubber cap that is fitted to your size by a doctor or nurse practitioner.
- You insert it into your vagina before you have sex. It can stay in place for up to 24 hours.
- Spermicide is used with the diaphragm to make it an effective method.
- The diaphragm is 94% effective when used correctly every time you have sex.
- With typical use, the diaphragm is 88% effective.

Female Condom

- The female condom is a soft, loose-fitting thin plastic pouch that does inside of a woman’s vagina.
- You put it in place before sex each time. A new condom must be used each time you have sex.
- Female condoms also protect against STIs and HIV.

- You can get female condoms at drug stores or family planning clinics. They are made of plastic so people with latex allergies can use them.
- Female condoms are at least 80% effective when used correctly every time you have sex.
- With typical use, the female condom is 79% effective.

Fertility Awareness

- Fertility awareness is learning to tell when you can get pregnant and avoiding sex (or using another method) during the time you can get pregnant. This method is sometimes call “Natural Family Planning” or “Rhythm Method”.
- Overall effectiveness depends on how well a woman tracks her body’s cycle changes and avoids sex during risky times.
- Fertility awareness is typically only 77% effective.
- Lactational amenorrhea method (LAM) is a temporary family planning method based on the natural effect of breastfeeding on fertility.
- Overall effectiveness depends on exclusive or full breastfeeding day and night of an infant less than six months old and the absence of monthly bleeding for a new mother.
- If used correctly and consistently, LAM is 99% effective.
- Typical use is 98% effective.

Spermicides

- Spermicides are chemicals that kill sperm. They come in several forms: foam, gel, film, or suppositories.
- You can get spermicides at a drug store or family planning clinic. They are very effective when used with a male condom.
- If used correctly every time you have sex, spermicides are considered 82% effective.
- Typical use is only 72% effective.

Emergency Contraception

If a condom breaks or your method fails, you may still prevent pregnancy with emergency contraception.

Emergency Contraceptive Pills

- Emergency contraceptive pills can be taken after unprotected sex to prevent pregnancy.
- Emergency contraceptive pills should be taken **as soon as possible**, but can be taken up to five (5) days after unprotected sex.
- Emergency contraceptive is ***not*** an abortion pill. It will ***not*** stop or harm an already established pregnancy.
- You can get emergency contraceptive pills over the counter at a drugstore or family planning clinic.
- Emergency contraceptive pill effectiveness varies by brand and the number of days after unprotected sex.