

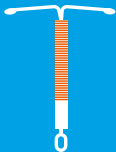
CONTRACEPTION

KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

Male condom



The coil



The pill



The implant



practice safer sex. ALWAYS USE A CONDOM



Pasante®

CONTRACEPTION

There are various methods of contraception available and it's worthwhile looking into which suits you best. This booklet briefly explains what options are currently available, how they work and some of the advantages and disadvantages.

Most types of contraception are available for free in the UK through the NHS. Places where you can get free contraception include GP surgeries, Sexual Health / GUM clinics and young people's services.

This booklet is only meant as a guide and you should refer to one of the above or a pharmacist for more information on each type of contraception.



MALE CONDOM

The male condom is used to cover the man's penis and stops sperm from entering the vagina, preventing pregnancy. It also provides a barrier against bacteria and viruses, reducing the risk of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). Male condoms come in both latex and non-latex versions.

Advantages

- When used correctly and consistently, condoms are a reliable method of preventing pregnancy.
- They help to protect both partners from STIs, including chlamydia, gonorrhoea and HIV.

Disadvantages

- Some couples find that using condoms interrupts sex – to get around this, try to make using a condom part of foreplay.
- Condoms are very strong, but may split or tear if not used properly.

FEMALE CONDOM

The female condom looks similar to a male condom but is wider and is instead placed inside the vagina. When used correctly during vaginal sex, it helps to protect against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Female condoms come in both latex and non-latex versions.

Advantages

- They help to protect both partners from STIs.
- When used correctly, condoms are a reliable method of preventing pregnancy.

Disadvantages

- Some couples find that putting a female condom in can interrupt sex.
- Condoms are very strong, but may split or tear if not used properly.



THE PILL

The most common contraceptive pill is the combined pill. This contains artificial versions of the female hormones oestrogen and progesterone, which women produce naturally in their ovaries. The pill is taken orally, in most cases everyday for 21 days. For the next 7 days you stop taking the pill and during this week you have a period-type bleed. After 7 days have passed you then start taking the pill again.

Advantages

- It does not interrupt sex.
- Periods are usually regular, lighter and less painful.

Disadvantages

- You are not protected against STIs.
- It can cause temporary side effects at first, such as headaches, nausea, breast tenderness and mood swings.



THE COIL

An intrauterine device, also known as an IUD or The Coil, is a small T-shaped plastic and copper device that is inserted into a woman's womb (uterus) by a specially trained doctor or nurse. There are two types of coil; hormone coil and copper coil. They work by stopping the sperm and egg from surviving in the womb or fallopian tubes.

Advantages

- Most women can use an IUD, including women who have never been pregnant.
- Once an IUD is fitted, it lasts for up to 10 years or until it's removed. Your normal fertility returns as soon as the IUD is taken out.

Disadvantages

- An IUD does not protect against STIs. If you get an STI while you have an IUD, it could lead to a pelvic infection if not treated.
- Your periods may become heavier, longer or more painful.



THE DIAPHRAGM



A diaphragm is a barrier method of contraception which fits inside the vagina to prevent sperm from passing through the cervix.

Diaphragms are soft, thin domes made of latex or silicone, and come in different shapes and sizes.

To be effective in preventing pregnancy, diaphragms need to be used with spermicide, which is a chemical that kills sperm.

Advantages

- You only need to use a diaphragm when you want to have sex.
- You can put it in at a convenient time before having sex but do not forget to use extra spermicide if you have it in for more than three hours.

Disadvantages

- You are not protected against STIs.
- It can take time to learn how to use it.

CONTRACEPTIVE INJECTION

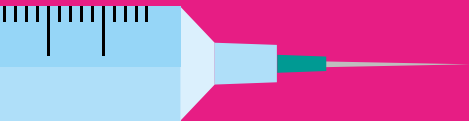
There are three types of contraceptive injections in the UK. The most popular is Depo-Provera. The injection contains progestogen and thickens the mucus in the cervix, stopping sperm reaching an egg. It also thins the womb lining and, in some, prevents the release of an egg.

Advantages

- Each injection lasts for either 8, 12 or 13 weeks.
- The injection does not interrupt sex.

Disadvantages

- The injection doesn't protect against STIs.
- It can cause headaches, nausea and changes in mood.



VAGINAL RING

The vaginal ring is a small, soft plastic ring that you place inside the vagina. You leave it in for 21 days, then remove it and throw it in the bin in a special disposal bag. 7 days after removing the ring, you insert a new one for the next 21 days.

Advantages

- It doesn't interrupt sex and is easy to put in and remove.
- You don't have to think about it every day or each time you have sex.

Disadvantages

- It may not be suitable if you don't feel comfortable inserting or removing it from your vagina.
- Spotting and bleeding while the ring is in your vagina can occur in the first few months.

CONTRACEPTIVE PATCH

The contraceptive patch is a sticky patch, a bit like a nicotine patch which delivers hormones into your body through the skin. It contains the same hormones as the combined pill and it works in the same way.

Advantages

- It is very easy to use and does not interrupt sex.
- Unlike the combined oral contraceptive pill, you do not have to think about it every day – you only have to remember to change the patch once a week.

Disadvantages

- It may be visible and can cause skin irritation, itching and soreness.
- It does not protect you against STIs.

THE IMPLANT




The contraceptive implant is a small flexible tube about 40mm long that is inserted under the skin of your upper arm. It is inserted by a trained professional, such as a doctor and lasts for three years.

The implant stops the release of an egg from the ovary by slowly releasing progestogen into your body.

Advantages

- The implant does not interrupt sex and can work for up to three years.
- It is an option if you cannot use the combined contraceptive pill, contraceptive patch or vaginal ring.

Disadvantages

- An implant doesn't protect against STIs.
 - It can cause disrupted and irregular periods, headaches, nausea and changes in mood.
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Useful Contacts:

www.nhs.uk

www.fpa.org.uk

www.brook.org.uk

www.tht.org.uk

National Sexual Health Helpline
0300 123 7123

Text prepared using various sources such as
NHS.uk & Fpa.org.uk in August 2017



www.pasante.com



T: 01903 753844 E: sales@pasante.com

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