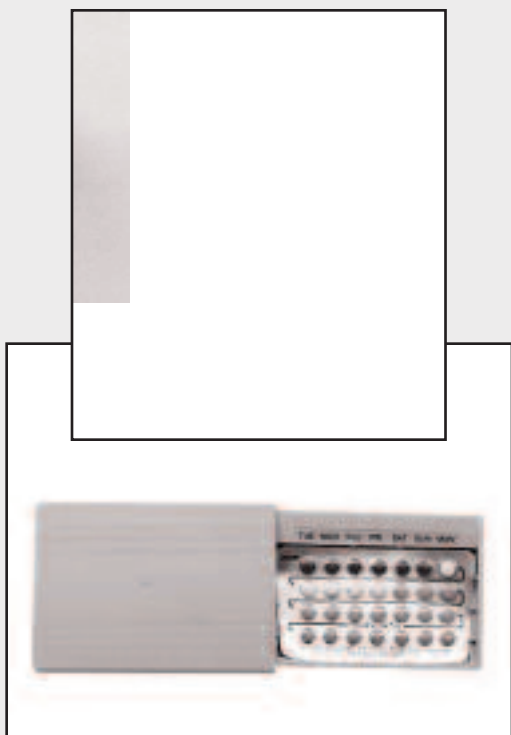


KAISER PERMANENTE®

Birth Control



*Which option
is best
for you?*

How do I choose?

THINK ABOUT IT

Choosing a method of birth control is an important decision. There are many questions to think about in order to select the method that works best for you. Before choosing a birth control method, ask yourself:

- How long do I want to postpone getting pregnant?
- Will I remember to take a pill?
- Will my partner and I use a barrier method (such as condoms) all the time?
- How comfortable am I touching my body . . . in order to use a diaphragm and/or foam?
- How do I feel about taking hormones (such as the Pill)?
- What amount of time am I willing to spend to make sure that I have my birth control when I need it?
- Condoms are the most effective way to protect people from getting sexually transmitted diseases or STDs. Will my partner and I be willing to use condoms in addition to the other birth control method I choose?

TALK ABOUT IT . . .

- with your partner(s)
- with your health care professional

ACT ON YOUR DISCUSSIONS

After talking about the pros and cons, choose a method that works best for your lifestyle. It may take some experimenting to find a method that works best for you. Using effective birth control is an important way to improve your health before you have a baby by helping you plan your pregnancies. Talk to your physician or nurse practitioner if you have any questions or concerns.

Contraceptive methods

IUD

PAGE 4

A small plastic device shaped like a “T” is placed inside the uterus to keep sperm from joining with the egg.

HORMONAL

PAGES 5-9

A small amount of hormones is gradually released, preventing the ovaries from releasing an egg every month.

- Implant
- Patch
- The Pill
- Injection
- Vaginal ring

BARRIER

PAGES 10-13

Sperm is blocked from reaching the egg.

- Condom, male
- Diaphragm
- Condom, female
- Cervical cap

OTHER CHOICES

PAGES 13-15

- Spermicide
- Sterilization
- Withdrawal
- Abstinence

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

PAGE 15-16

Pills that can help prevent pregnancy are taken after you have had sex and didn't use birth control or after you have had sex and the method failed.

HOW DO I GET THE BIRTH CONTROL METHOD I'VE CHOSEN?

PAGE 16

RISK OF PREGNANCY

“Risk of pregnancy” means how well the method works in preventing pregnancy. If the risk is 3 to 5 percent, that means if 100 women use the method for one year, 3 to 5 of them will become pregnant. The risk of pregnancy for you may be higher or lower than stated depending on how closely you follow the directions. Your risk can be higher if birth control pills are missed, injections are late, or if the patch is not replaced exactly on schedule.

IUD

Intrauterine device

WHAT IS IT?

A small plastic device shaped like a “T” is placed in the uterus to keep sperm from joining with the egg. This prevents a fertilized egg from implanting in the uterine lining. There are two types of IUDs—one type of IUD releases a hormone and the other does not release hormones.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- Fewer than 1 percent of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- Does not interrupt sexual activity.
- No pill to take each day.
- The IUD with the hormone may make periods less painful and reduces bleeding.

DISADVANTAGES

- No protection against STDs.
- Spotting between periods may occur with either type of IUD.
- Side effects of the IUD without hormones may include increased cramps and heavier periods.



Contraceptive Implant

WHAT IS IT?

A single small flexible rod placed just under the skin in the upper arm that releases a hormone (progestin) that prevents ovulation.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- Fewer than 1 percent of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- Protects against pregnancy for 3 years.
- Does not interrupt sexual activity.
- Can be used while breastfeeding.
- No pill to take each day.
- May decrease risk of cancer and pelvic inflammatory disease.
- Does not affect bone density.

DISADVANTAGES

- No protection against STDs.
- Can cause infection in the arm.
- Requires a small procedure to fit and remove it.
- Side effects can include spotting, headaches, acne, weight changes.



Injection

(Depo Provera or “The Shot”)

WHAT IS IT?

A hormone shot given in the arm or buttock every 12 weeks. Similar to the pill, the shot uses hormone to prevent pregnancy.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- Fewer than 3 percent of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- No pill to take each day.
- Does not interrupt sexual activity.
- One shot protects against pregnancy for 12 weeks.
- Periods may become lighter or stop entirely.
- May decrease risk of cancer of the uterus and ovaries.
- Very effective birth control for most women of all ages.

DISADVANTAGES

- No protection against STDs.
- Must return regularly to the doctor to get a shot.
- May cause changes in your period.
- Other possible side effects may include tender breasts, headaches, and/or mood changes.
- May cause delay in getting pregnant after you stop getting the shots.
- May change appetite, resulting in weight loss or gain.
- May cause temporary loss of bone density.



Patch

Non-formulary

WHAT IS IT?

A woman places a patch on the skin that releases hormones into the body. She changes the patch each week.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- 8 percent or more of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- Does not interrupt sexual activity.
- Can be worn during exercising and bathing.
- No shots or pill to remember to take.

DISADVANTAGES

- No protection against STDs.
- May have skin reactions or allergies at the site of the patch.
- Must remember to replace the patch each week.
- May have higher risk of blood clots, heart attack, and stroke in smokers over 35 years old.



Vaginal ring

Non-formulary

WHAT IS IT?

A woman inserts a small flexible ring into her vagina that contains the hormones estrogen and progestin. She changes it regularly each month.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- 8 percent or more of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- Does not interrupt sexual activity.
- No shots or pill to remember to take.

DISADVANTAGES

- No protection against STDs.
- Must feel comfortable inserting and removing the ring from the vagina.
- Must remember to place and remove the ring each month.
- May have higher risk of blood clots, heart attack, and stroke in smokers over 35 years old.



The Pill

WHAT IS IT?

Every day, a woman takes a pill that contains one or two hormones, usually estrogen and progesterin.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- 8 percent of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- Does not interrupt sexual activity.
- Periods become more regular, lighter, and less painful.
- Decreased acne and anemia.
- May decrease risk of cancer of the uterus and ovaries.

DISADVANTAGES

- No protection against STDs.
- Must remember to take a pill every day.
- Higher risk of blood clots, heart attack, and stroke in smokers over 35 years old.



Condom

Male

WHAT IS IT?

A sheath that is rolled down an erect penis before having sex. It catches sperm so it does not reach the egg.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- 15 percent of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- Latex and polyurethane condoms are effective protection against many sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV.
- More effective when used with a spermicidal lubricant.
- Sold at drug stores and supermarkets.

DISADVANTAGES

- Can interrupt sexual activity.
- Some people are allergic to latex (polyurethane or animal skin condoms can be used instead).
- Animal skin condoms do not protect against STDs.
- Spermicides such as nonoxynol-9 may increase risk of transmitting STDs when used with a condom.
- Less effective.



Condom

Female

WHAT IS IT?

A polyurethane sheath that is placed inside the vagina or anus during sex. A ring at the outside of the vagina keeps the condom in place and spreads over the genital area.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

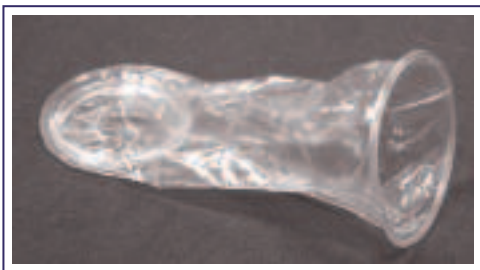
- 21 percent of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- Effective protection against many sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV.
- Sold at drug stores and supermarkets.

DISADVANTAGES

- Can interrupt sexual activity.
- Must feel comfortable inserting the condom in the vagina.
- Less effective.



Diaphragm

WHAT IS IT?

A shallow cup that is inserted into the vagina before intercourse. Spermicide must be used with a diaphragm.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- Up to 20 percent of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- No hormones to take.
- Can be put in before sex and left in place for up to 24 hours.

DISADVANTAGES

- No protection against STDs.
- Must feel comfortable inserting and removing the diaphragm.
- Cannot use if you are allergic to latex or spermicide.
- Must leave in place for at least six hours after sex.
- Needs to be refitted after a pregnancy or if a large change in weight occurs.
- Less effective.



Cervical cap



WHAT IS IT?

Shaped like a thimble, the cap is inserted into the vagina before intercourse. It fits snugly over the cervix and is held in place by a small amount of suction. Spermicide must be used.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- Up to 20 percent of women who never had a child will become pregnant.
- Up to 40 percent of women who have had a child will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- No hormones to take.
- Can be put in before sex and left in place for up to 24 hours.

DISADVANTAGES

- No protection against STDs.
- Must feel comfortable inserting and removing the cap.
- Cannot use if you are allergic to latex or spermicide or have your period.
- Must be left in place for at least six hours after sex.
- Less effective.

Spermicide

WHAT IS IT?

A gel, foam, cream, film, or tablet that contains a chemical to kill sperm that is placed inside the vagina before intercourse.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- 29 percent of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- Sold at drugstores and supermarkets.

DISADVANTAGES

- May cause skin irritation that can increase the risk of STD infection.
- Less effective.

Withdrawal

WHAT IS IT?

The man “pulls out” of the vagina before ejaculating (“cumming”). This keeps the sperm from fertilizing the egg.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- 27 percent of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- Free.
- Causes no medical side effects.

DISADVANTAGES

- Least effective method of birth control.
 - No protection against STDs.
 - Sperm can be released by an erect penis even before the man ejaculates (“cums”).
-

Sterilization

Tubal ligation for women • Vasectomy for men

WHAT IS IT?

In women, the tubes that carry the egg from the ovary to the uterus are permanently blocked so the egg cannot be fertilized by sperm. In men, the tubes that carry sperm from the testicles and out the penis are permanently blocked.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- Fewer than 1 percent of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- Does not affect sexual activity or enjoyment for either sex.
- Permanent protection against pregnancy.

DISADVANTAGES

- No protection against STDs.
- Permanent method of birth control.
- If a woman gets pregnant after having her tubes tied, the risk of tubal pregnancy is high.

Abstinence

WHAT IS IT?

Partners do not have sexual intercourse. Many couples are sexual in other ways without letting the penis enter the vagina.

RISK OF PREGNANCY

- 0-25 percent of women will become pregnant.

ADVANTAGES

- Prevents STDs.
- No side effects.

DISADVANTAGES

- Many people find it difficult to keep from having sexual intercourse for long periods of time.
- If people choose to have sex, they can forget to protect against pregnancy and STDs.

Emergency contraception

Emergency contraceptive pills (ECP or Plan B) can prevent pregnancy after you have had sex and didn't use birth control or your birth control method failed to work. If you take ECPs within 120 hours (5 days) after having unprotected sex, the risk of getting pregnant is reduced by 85 percent. The sooner you take ECPs after having had unprotected sex, the more effective they are in preventing pregnancy. It is important to use condoms or abstain from sex until you get your period.

Talk to your healthcare provider or a pharmacist about obtaining ECPs without prescription.

ADVANTAGES

- Even if you can't take birth control pills for medical reasons, you can usually use ECPs.
- You can obtain ECPs *before* you need them so that you will have them in case of an emergency.

(cont'd on back page)

DISADVANTAGES OF EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

- You may feel sick to your stomach, dizzy, or have a headache.
- You could have menstrual spotting or bleeding. Your breasts may feel tender.
- ECPs are not as effective as regular birth control methods.
- ECPs do not protect you against STDs.

Talk to your healthcare provider or the pharmacist to obtain ECPs before you need them or as soon as possible after having had unprotected sex.

How do I get the birth control method I've chosen?

Male and female condoms and spermicides don't require a prescription and can be purchased at most Kaiser Permanente pharmacies, as well as drugstores and supermarkets.

Talk to your healthcare provider or a pharmacist to obtain Emergency Contraceptives (ECPs) *before* you need them, or as soon as possible after having had unprotected sex.

You will need a prescription for the other methods described in this booklet. Call your local Kaiser Permanente facility to make an appointment to see your doctor or other health care professional.



Not all contraceptive methods are covered health plan benefits. If you have questions about your health plan coverage, please contact Member Services at 1-800-464-4000.