













## Your Safer Sex Options: Preventing Pregnancy & Protecting Against STIs

- ⇒ Depo-provera (the hormonal injection) and the IUD are the most effective types of birth control.
- ⇒ It is best to use condoms and another method that protects against pregnancy (birth control pills, IUD, depo-provera, etc.).
- ⇒ Condoms come in many shapes, sizes, colors, flavors and varieties. Try a different shapes or styles if a condom feels uncomfortable. Check out [condomania.com](http://condomania.com) for different options.
- ⇒ New birth control products come out all the time. To learn about new methods, ask your health care provider.

<b>METHOD</b>	<b>HOW IT WORKS</b>	<b>PROS</b>	<b>CONS</b>
<b>Male Condom</b> 86-97% effective 	Piece of plastic/rubber covers penis and stops cum from entering vagina or anus.	Protects against STIs (latex are the best) and pregnancy. Don't need a prescription.	You have to be prepared. A new one is needed after every act of sexual intercourse.
<b>Female Condom</b> 79-95% effective 	Piece of plastic shaped like a sock that goes in the vagina or anus and stops cum from entering.	Provides protection against STIs and pregnancy. Can be use by people with latex allergies. Don't need a prescription.	Condom can be noisy or feel uncomfortable.
<b>Cervical Cap</b> 82-94% effective 	Rubber cup that covers the opening to the womb or uterus and blocks sperm.	Can put it in several hours before sexual intercourse.	No protection against STI and has to be fit by a health care provider. It can cost a lot without insurance.
<b>Diaphragm</b> 80-94% effective 	Dome shaped rubber cup that covers the cervix and blocks sperm.	Don't have to take it out between acts of sexual intercourse. Works for about 6 hours, but need to reapply spermicide.	No protection against STIs and can be messy or awkward to use.
<b>Spermicides</b> 74-85% effective 	Gel that is put in vagina before intercourse and kills the sperm.	Don't need a prescription.	It's messy. Not the best protection against STIs.
<b>Injection (Depo-Provera)</b> 99% effective 	A hormone shot taken every 3 months	Can't see it. You don't have to worry about birth control for 3 months once you get the shot. Can stop periods.	No STI protection and need to go to see a provider every 3 months for next shot. Can stop periods.
<b>Oral Contraceptives (Birth Control Pills)</b> 95-99% effective 	Hormone pills taken everyday that stops release of egg from ovary	24/7 protection. Can make periods lighter and more regular	Need to remember or remind your partner to take the pill everyday. No STI protection.

**Your Safer Sex Options** *cont.*

METHOD	HOW IT WORKS	PROS	CONS
<b>Vaginal Ring (Nuva Ring)</b> 99% effective 	Plastic ring that's put inside the vagina and left in for three weeks. A new ring is reinserted 1 week later.	Can't see it. You only have to insert and remove it once a month.	No protection against STIs. Have to feel comfortable putting in and taking out the ring or help your partner put it in and take it out.
<b>Birth Control Patch (Ortho Evra)</b> 99% effective 	A patch that is worn on the skin in a certain area that must be changed every week.	Does not require taking a pill. Can be hidden by clothing.	No protection against STIs. Must change it every week. Can cause side effects like breast tenderness and nausea.
<b>Hormonal Implant (Implanon)</b> 99% effective 	A small tube with hormones is inserted in the women's upper arm.	Barely visible and works for 3 years.	No protection against STIs. Can cause irregular periods.
<b>Emergency Contraception</b> 75-88% effective 	Hormone pills taken 3-5 days after unprotected sex. Stops ovulation or prevents egg from being fertilized.	Can be taken after intercourse.	Not a regular form of birth control. Does not protect against STIs.
<b>Intra-uterine Device (IUD)</b> 97-99% effective 	A plastic device is put in the woman's uterus.	Hormonal IUD is good for 5 years. The copper IUD is good for 10 years.	No protection against STIs. Risk of serious infection shortly after insertion. Can make your periods irregular.
<b>Withdrawal</b> 81-96% effective	During intercourse, the man pulls his penis out of the vagina or anus before he cums.	Is natural and no supplies are needed.	Pulling out in time can be difficult to predict. Pre-ejaculation fluids can transfer HIV and other STIs.
<b>Abstinence</b> 100% effective	A couple does not have sex.	Only definite way to prevent pregnancy and STIs.	Requires motivation, self-control and communication from both partners. Only works if it is used 100% of the time.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THESE METHODS, CHECK OUT THESE WEBSITES:**

 **Young Women's Health:**  
<http://www.youngwomenshealth.org/contra.html>

 **Teen Talk**  
<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/teen-talk/birth-control-25029.htm>