



Contraception for Women

English
July 2019

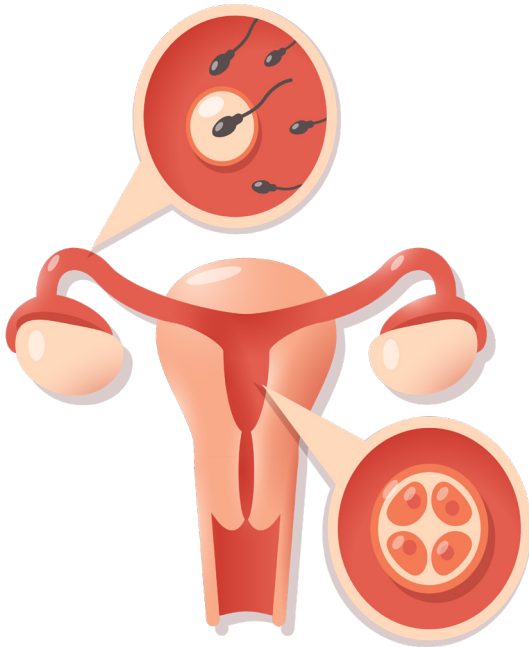
**Every woman
has a right to
plan her family
and choose the
right time to
have children.**

Contraception is also known as birth control. It includes any behavior, device, medication, or procedure used to prevent pregnancy.

This factsheet gives an overview of the methods of contraception available in Australia. It is important to choose the one that is right for you. To find the best one for you, speak with a doctor or nurse.

If you have sex with a man and you don't want to get pregnant, you need to use contraception. You might choose different methods of contraception at different times in your life.

How Pregnancy Works



Pregnancy can happen when semen from a man enters a woman's body through her vagina during sex. Semen has sperm in it. Sperm can travel from the vagina through the cervix, uterus and fallopian tubes, though many do not make it all the way. A woman's ovaries release an egg into the fallopian tube once a month, this is called ovulation. If sperms find an egg in the fallopian tube, they may be able to fertilise it, which causes pregnancy.

Most contraceptives need to be prescribed by a doctor.

This is because the doctor has to:

- › Discuss with you the different options.
- › Consider your age, lifestyle and health issues.
- › Provide you with a prescription for the contraception.
- › Review and change the contraception if it is not working for you.

Available contraception for women

CONDOM (MALE AND FEMALE)



MALE CONDOM

HOW IT WORKS:

Condoms are the **ONLY** contraception method that reduce the risk of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI).

Condoms prevent sperm from entering the uterus. There are condoms for men and for women.



FEMALE CONDOM

CONTRACEPTIVE IMPLANT (IMPLANON)



HOW IT WORKS:

This is a small plastic rod that a doctor places under the skin of your upper arm with an injection. It slowly releases a low dose of the hormone progestogen, which stops your ovaries releasing an egg each month. The implant will last for three years. You can ask your doctor or nurse to remove this at any time.

CONTRACEPTIVE INJECTION



HOW IT WORKS:

This is an injection which releases a hormone called progestogen into your body. Progestogen stops your ovaries from releasing an egg each month. This needs to be given by a doctor every 3 months to work.

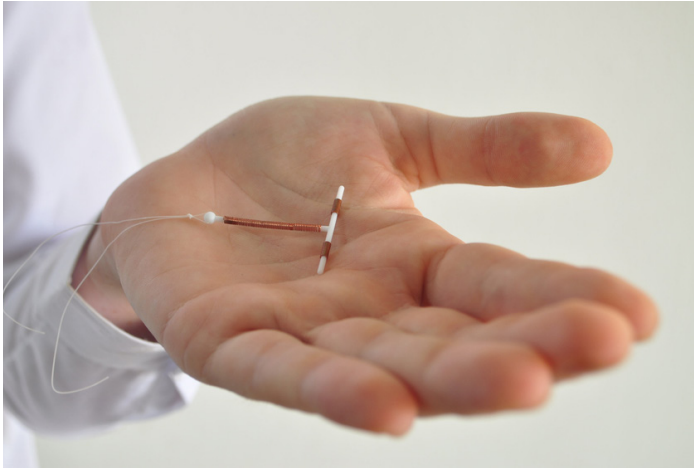
DIAPHRAGM



HOW IT WORKS:

This is a soft silicone cap worn inside the vagina to cover the entrance to the uterus. You must put the diaphragm inside your vagina (like a tampon) before sex and remove it within 6 hours after having sex. A diaphragm can be used many times. It is not as good as other methods to stop pregnancy.

INTRA UTERINE DEVICE (IUD)



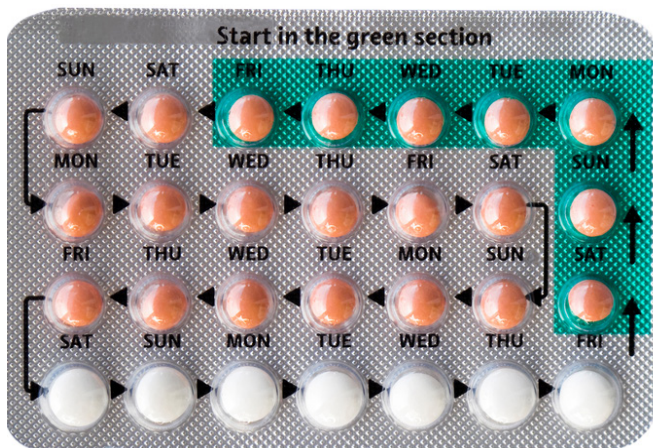
HOW IT WORKS:

This is a small contraceptive device that is placed in your uterus. There are two kinds:

- The copper IUD which lasts for 5 to 10 years
- The hormone releasing IUD (Mirena) which lasts for 5 years

An IUD stops sperm from reaching and fertilising an egg. It also changes the lining of your uterus so a fertilised egg won't stick to it. You can ask a doctor or nurse to remove an IUD.

ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE PILL



HOW IT WORKS:

This is a pill which you swallow. There are different types of pills. You should ask your doctor which is best for you.

The two main types of contraceptive pills are:

- The combined oral contraceptive pill (COC). This has two hormones (oestrogen and progestogen). These stop your ovaries from releasing an egg each month. They stop sperm from getting through the uterus by thickening the fluid in the uterus.
- The mini pill. This contains only one hormone. It makes the fluid at the opening to the uterus thicker, so that sperm cannot pass through to fertilise the egg. This pill doesn't stop you ovulating (releasing an egg) and needs to be taken at the same time daily.

VAGINAL RING



HOW IT WORKS:

This is a soft plastic ring that is inserted into the vagina. It slowly releases low doses of two hormones, oestrogen and progestogen that are absorbed into your body. The vaginal ring is inserted for three weeks. You remove it for one week to have your regular period. After the week without the ring, you insert a new one.

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILL (ECP)



HOW IT WORKS:

If you have sex and are not using another contraceptive method, there are things you can do to reduce the chance of pregnancy:

- The copper IUD is the most effective method of emergency contraception when inserted within five days of unprotected sex (see information below).
- There are two types of emergency contraceptive pills. One can be taken up to three and the other one up to 5 days after unprotected sex. You can buy the pills at most pharmacies without a prescription. It is not 100% effective in stopping pregnancy but works best when taken as soon as possible after sex. It is also known as the "morning after pill" because many women will get it the morning after they have had sex.

WHERE TO GET HELP?

> 1800 MY OPTIONS

Tel. 1800 696 784 Interpreter 131450

<https://www.1800myoptions.org.au>

> REFUGEE HEALTH

<http://refugeehealthnetwork.org.au/refer/refugee-health-nurse-program>

> COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICE

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/primary-and-community-health/community-health/community-health-directory>

> FAMILY PLANNING VICTORIA

Tel. 1800 013 952 or 03 9257 0100

<https://www.fpv.org.au/for-you/contraception>

<http://share.ceh.org.au/services-available>

> YOUR GENERAL PRACTITIONER (GP)

> YOUR PHARMACY