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Ottawa



Planning
des naissances
d'Ottawa

Birth Control Options

Let's Talk!



BY PHONE

613-226-3234 ext. 101
Weekdays 12-4pm



BY EMAIL

ppottawa@ppottawa.ca



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www.ppottawa.ca



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How does birth control work?



To understand how birth control works, it can be helpful to understand how pregnancy happens first. In order for someone to become pregnant, you need a human egg, sperm, and a place for the pregnancy to grow. Sperm is created in the testicles and can exit through the penis. A human egg (or ova) comes from the ovaries and travels to the fallopian tube during a process called ovulation. Finally, a pregnancy can grow inside the uterus.



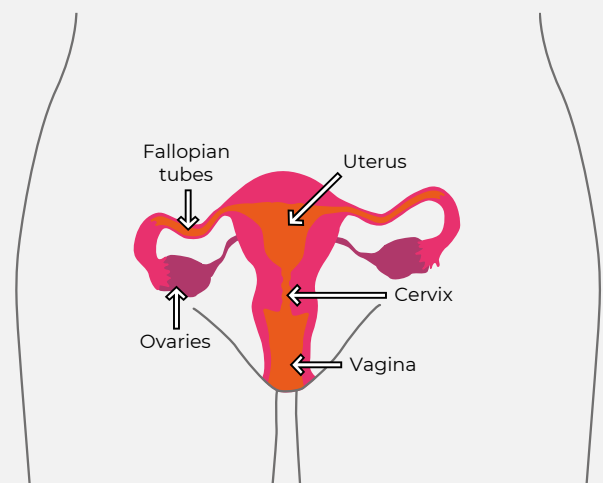
For a sperm and egg to meet and then grow in the uterus, sperm often will travel through the penis, into the vagina, through the cervix, through the uterus, and into the fallopian tubes to find an egg. If the fluid in the cervix (otherwise called cervical mucus) does not allow the sperm to travel through, this can stop a pregnancy.

Stopping sperm from getting through the cervix is one way birth control works to prevent pregnancy.

If a sperm does travel to the fallopian tube and does not find an egg, a pregnancy also cannot happen. **Stopping when an egg is released so that a sperm does not find an egg (or fertilize an egg) is another way to prevent pregnancy.**

Finally, if the uterus does not have a uterine lining for a sperm and egg to grow (in a process called implantation), a pregnancy cannot occur. There are many days in which the uterus does not have enough of a uterine lining for a pregnancy to happen, and **birth control can help reduce the uterine lining so that a pregnancy cannot grow.**

All these steps are carefully controlled by hormones in a person's body, which is why many birth control methods use hormones to stop a pregnancy before it happens.



The Pill(s)



There are many different brands of birth control pills but all of them use hormones to reduce the chance of a pregnancy.

HOW DO I GET IT?

Birth Control Pills are prescribed by a healthcare provider and then you can pick the pills up at a pharmacy. Without any form of insurance, the birth control pill is approximately \$30 a month in Ottawa.

HOW DO I USE IT?

The pills can come in 28 or 21 day packs, and each pill has to be taken at the same time every day. When using a 21 day pack, you will stop taking a pill during the week when you have a period and then start a new pack after that week.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

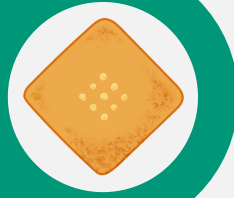
- You want a method to reduce your risk of pregnancy by 92% with typical use.
- You have irregular or painful periods and could benefit from the hormone-regulating effects of the pill.
- You are comfortable asking a healthcare provider for a prescription and going to a pharmacy.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You think you might have trouble taking the pill at the same time every day.
- You experience unwanted side effects from taking the pill such as weight gain or mood changes. If this happens, talk to a healthcare provider about switching to a different brand of pill or new method of birth control.
- You cannot or do not want to use a hormonal method of birth control.
- You want to easily hide the birth control you are using from those around you.
- You have no insurance or other way to pay the cost of \$30 a month
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).



The Patch (Evra)



The birth control patch uses hormones to reduce the risk of pregnancy. The patch looks like a square bandage or a nicotine patch. It is thin, beige, and sticks to your skin.

HOW DO I GET IT?

The patch is prescribed by a healthcare provider and then you can pick up the patch at a pharmacy. Without any form of insurance, the patch is approximately \$30 a month in Ottawa.

HOW DO I USE IT?

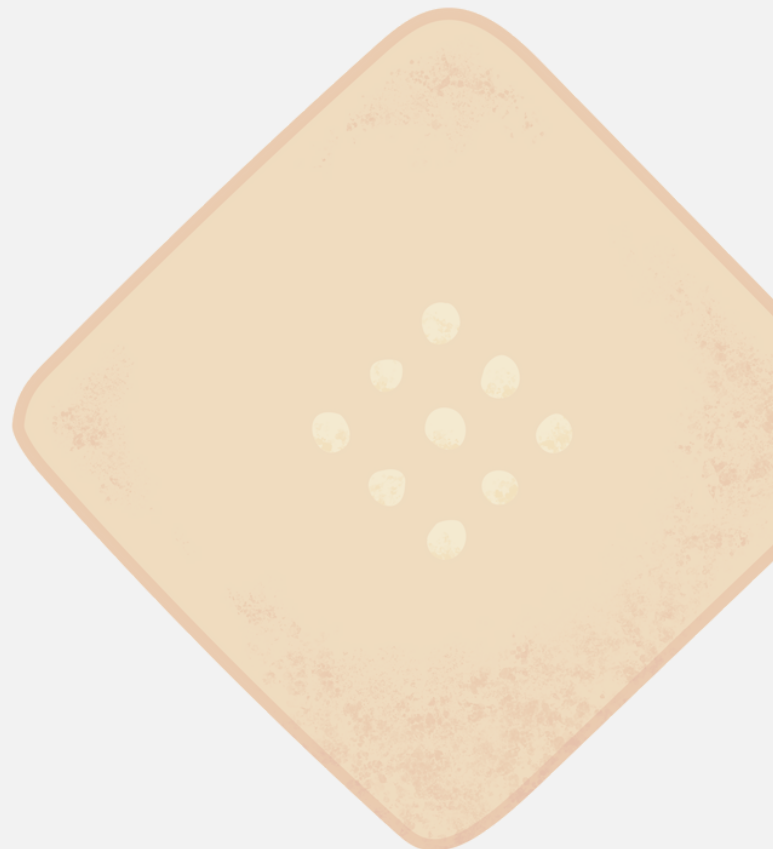
The patch can be put on four areas of the body: buttocks (bum), lower abdomen, upper arm, or upper torso (excluding breasts). Wear one new patch each week for three weeks in a row. On the fourth week do not wear a patch. This is the week your period should start. You are protected from pregnancy as long as you wore your patch correctly, and start your new one patch on time the following week.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want a method to reduce your risk of pregnancy by 92% with typical use.
- You like the schedule of having to remember this method once a week.
- You have irregular or painful periods and could benefit from the hormone-regulating effects of the pill.
- You are comfortable asking a healthcare provider for a prescription and going to a pharmacy.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You do not like that the patch only comes in a pale beige colour, which does not match many skin tones.
- The glue that helps the patch stick irritates your skin.
- You experience unwanted side effects from taking the patch such as weight gain or mood changes. If this happens, talk to a healthcare provider about switching to a different method of birth control.
- You cannot or do not want to use a hormonal method of birth control.
- You want to easily hide the birth control you are using from those around you.
- You have no insurance or other way to pay the cost of \$30 a month
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).



The Ring (Nuvaring)



The birth control ring is a small, flexible plastic ring that uses hormones to reduce the risk of pregnancy.

HOW DO I GET IT?

The ring is prescribed by a healthcare provider and then you can pick up the ring at a pharmacy. Without any form of insurance, the ring is approximately \$30 a month in Ottawa.

HOW DO I USE IT?

Squeeze the sides of the ring together and insert into the vagina as high as you can. Leave the ring there for three weeks and on the fourth week, use your fingers to remove the ring. During this week you will have a period, and are still protected against pregnancy. Insert a new ring after your ring-free week. If the ring slips out of the vagina during the 3 week period where you need to have the ring in, rinse the ring in lukewarm water and reinsert it within 3 hours to ensure it stays effective.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want a method to reduce your risk of pregnancy by 92% with typical use.
- You like the schedule of having to think of this method twice a month (once for inserting, and once for removal on the 4th week)
- You have irregular or painful periods and could benefit from the hormone-regulating effects of the pill.
- You are comfortable asking a healthcare provider for a prescription and going to a pharmacy.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You are not comfortable touching or inserting objects into your vagina.
- You are worried your partner may notice that you are using this form of birth control.
- You are worried that it may slip out of the vagina.
- You experience unwanted side effects from using the ring such as weight gain or mood changes. If this happens, talk to a healthcare provider about switching to a different method of birth control.
- You cannot or do not want to use a hormonal method of birth control.
- You have no insurance or other way to pay the cost of \$30 a month.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).

The Shot (Depo-Provera)



The birth control Shot (Depo-Provera) is a hormone-containing injection that reduces the risk of pregnancy.

HOW DO I GET IT?

The shot is prescribed by a healthcare provider and then you pick up the shot from a pharmacy. In Ottawa the shot costs approximately \$40 without any insurance. With the shot, you then go back to a healthcare provider who will inject the shot often into your upper arm.

HOW DO I USE IT?

Ensure that you have a healthcare provider inject the shot every three months.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want a method to reduce your risk of pregnancy by 97% with typical use.
- You prefer the schedule of an injection every three months.
- You want a birth control method that is safe to use while breastfeeding.
- You want a method that is easy to hide from others.
- You are comfortable asking a healthcare provider for a prescription and going to a pharmacy.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You are uncomfortable with needles.
- You are concerned about experiencing unwanted side effects (like weight gain or mood changes) which might last a few months.

- You or your healthcare provider are concerned about bone-density loss.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You are uncomfortable with needles.
- You are concerned about experiencing unwanted side effects (like weight gain or mood changes) which might last a few months.
- You or your healthcare provider are concerned about bone-density loss.
- You cannot or do not want to use a hormonal method of birth control.
- You are thinking about getting pregnant in the next few months.
- You have no insurance or other way to pay the cost of \$40 every three months.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).

The Implant (Nexplanon)



The Implant is a tiny rod the size of a matchstick that releases hormones to reduce the risk of pregnancy.

HOW DO I GET IT?

The implant is prescribed by a health care provider and then you go to a pharmacy to pick up the implant. In Ottawa the implant costs approximately \$300 without any insurance. With the implant, you will book a follow up appointment with a healthcare provider who can insert the implant just under the skin of your arm. Insertion usually takes a couple of minutes.

HOW DO I USE IT?

Once you have the implant in your arm by a healthcare provider, you don't need to do anything else. The implant provides an equal amount of protection against pregnancy while it is in place and can be used in Canada for up to 3 years.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want a method that reduces the risk of pregnancy by 99%
- You like that you only have to think about this method once every three years.
- You want a method that is easy to hide from others.
- You have painful periods and could benefit from the hormone-regulating effects of this product. Many people see their period reduce or stop completely while using this product.



YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You are uncomfortable with having a device inserted into your arm by a healthcare provider.
- You don't like having an irregular or inconsistent periods
- You cannot or do not want to use a hormonal method of birth control.
- You want to become pregnant in the next three years.
- You have no insurance or other way to pay the one time upfront cost of approximately \$300.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).

Hormonal Intrauterine Device (IUD)

[Intrauterine Device System (IUS)]



A hormonal IUD is a small T-shaped device that is inserted by a healthcare provider into the uterus to prevent pregnancy. Attached to the IUD are two threads that hang down past the cervix (the opening to the uterus) and into the top of the vagina.

HOW DO I GET IT?

An IUD is prescribed by a health care provider and then you often will go to a pharmacy to pick up the IUD. In Ottawa the hormonal IUD costs approximately \$350-\$400 without any insurance. With the IUD, you will book a follow up appointment with a healthcare provider who can insert the IUD into your cervix. Insertion usually takes a couple of minutes.

HOW DO I USE IT?

Once you have an IUD inserted, it can stay in your uterus for up to 5 years. Over the years, a healthcare provider will sometimes check the placement of the IUD using an ultrasound or by looking at the strings of the IUD.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want a method that reduces the risk of pregnancy by 99%
- You like that you only have to think about this method once every five years.
- You have painful periods and could benefit from the hormone-regulating effects of this product. Many people see their period reduce or stop completely while using this product.
- You want a method that is easy to hide from others.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You do not want the cramping and discomfort of an IUD insertion and removal.
- You are worried about the rare cases where the IUD moves out of place.
- You don't like having an irregular or inconsistent periods
- You cannot or do not want to use a hormonal method of birth control.
- You want to become pregnant in the next five years.
- You have no insurance or other way to pay the one time upfront cost of approximately \$350-\$400.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).



External Condom



The external condom is a tube that fits over an erect penis and prevents sperm from entering the vagina to prevent pregnancy. Condoms are often made out of latex but are also available in polyurethane or polyisoprene for those with latex allergies.

HOW DO I GET IT?

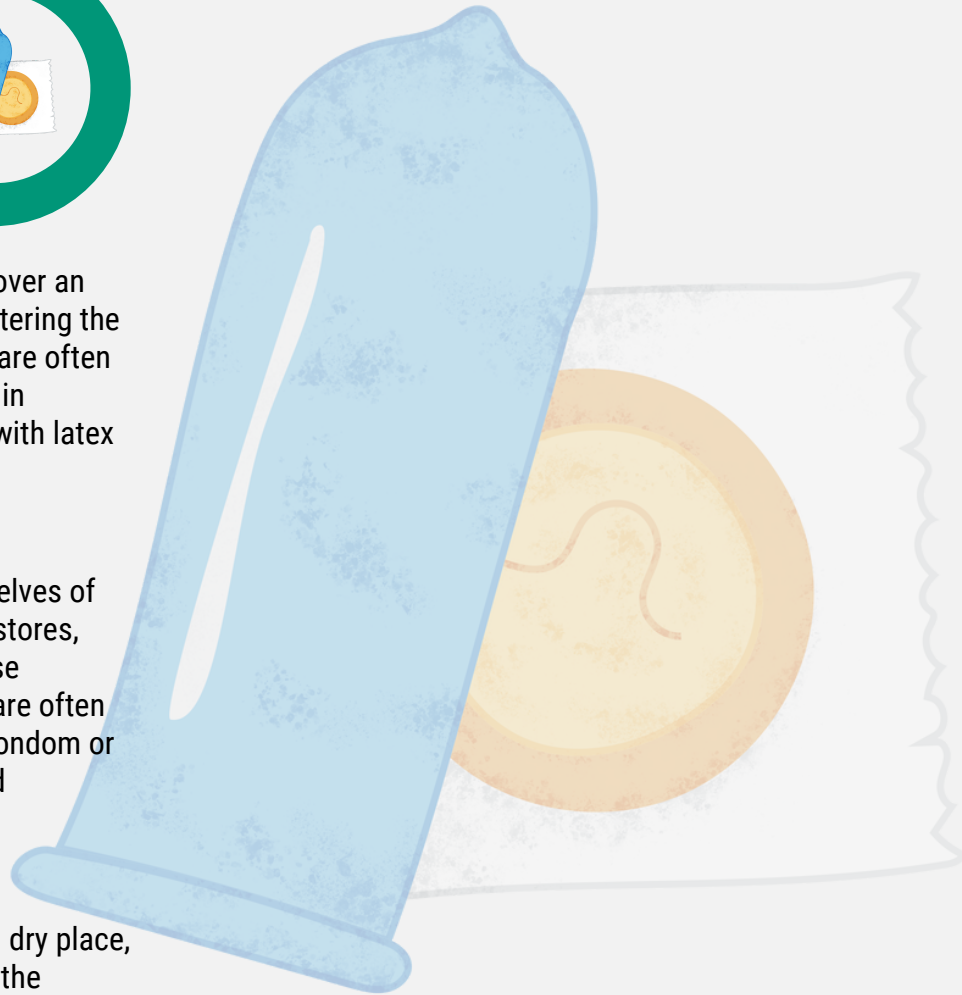
Condoms are widely available on the shelves of pharmacies, corner stores, department stores, and grocery stores. Anyone can purchase condoms at these locations. Condoms are often sold in boxes of approximately \$1 per condom or you can access them for free at Planned Parenthood Ottawa.

HOW DO I USE IT?

Ensure the condom was stored in a cool dry place, that the condom is not expired and that the package is not torn before using. Open the condom and pinch the tip before rolling the condom all the way down the penis. It's important to find the right size of condom so that the condom feels comfortable and doesn't come off. If the condom is not already lubricated (aka slippery) it can be helpful to use a lubricant when putting on and using the condom. However, it's important not to use an oil based lubricant which can damage the condom.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want a method that reduces the risk of pregnancy by 87% with typical use.
- You want a product that is cheap (or sometimes free at local community centers).
- You want a product that is easy to find.



- You don't want to talk to a healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- You want a method that reduces the risk of STIs (sexually transmitted infections).

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You find using condoms difficult (If you want to get better at using condoms, it's okay to practice.)
- You find condoms uncomfortable.
- You are unable to talk about condoms with the person you are having sex with.

Internal (Female) Condom



The internal condom is a thin polyurethane tube with one closed end that goes inside the vagina to stop sperm from entering the cervix to prevent pregnancy.

HOW DO I GET IT?

Internal condoms can be a little harder to find than external condoms but can be bought at some pharmacies, online, or at speciality stores. You can also ask your local pharmacy to order in internal condoms for you. Internal condoms are often sold in a package of approximately \$5 per condom or you can access them for free at Planned Parenthood Ottawa.

HOW DO I USE IT?

Ensure the condom was stored in a cool dry place, that the condom is not expired and that the package is not torn before using. Open the package, hold the condom with the open end hanging down. Insert the closed end of the condom into your vagina or anus by squeezing the inner ring with your fingers to make a more narrow shape. Make sure the condom is not twisted and that the outer ring lies against the vulva or anus. After sex, the condom should be removed before you stand up. Twist the outer ring to keep the sperm inside the condom and pull the condom out.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want a product that is cheap (or sometimes free at local community centres).
- You like to be able to insert the condom a couple of hours before sex.
- You don't want to talk to a healthcare provider.

- You want to reduce the risk of STIs (sexually transmitted infections).
- You want something that is latex-free

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You have difficulty inserting it.
- You are unable to talk about condoms with the person you are having sex with.
- You have trouble finding it.
- You cannot afford the higher cost of this condom.
- You want a birth control method that is more effective than 79% with typical use.

Diaphragm (Caya)



A diaphragm is a silicone dome that prevents pregnancy by preventing sperm from getting through the cervix. The diaphragm should always be used with a spermicide or contraceptive gel to ensure sperm does not pass through the cervix.

HOW DO I GET IT?

In other countries, there is a diaphragm that can be provided and sized by healthcare providers. To access the diaphragm in Ottawa, you can purchase it at a pharmacy without a prescription for between \$75-\$100. You should also purchase a contraceptive gel or spermicide to use with it which can be around \$30 for a tube. The brand name of the diaphragm available without a prescription is the Caya diaphragm which fits most people. Not all pharmacies have a Caya Diaphragm in stock but many can order it in for you, you just need to ask the pharmacist.

HOW DO I USE IT?

To use the diaphragm, start placing the contraceptive gel or spermicide inside the dome shape of the diaphragm. Then squeeze the rim of the diaphragm until the sides touch together and insert it into the vagina as far up as possible. After vaginal sex, leave the diaphragm in for at least 6 hours to ensure that it prevents any sperm from entering the cervix. Do not keep the diaphragm in for more than 24 hours. When you remove the diaphragm, wash it with mild soap and water. Diaphragms are reusable and usually last about a year depending on the amount of use.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want a method of birth control that is around 83% effective with typical use.
- You don't want to talk to a healthcare provider.
- You want or need a birth control method that does not contain hormones.
- You are comfortable picking up this form of birth control at a pharmacy.
- You want a birth control method that you can reuse. (While you need more spermicide or contraceptive gel in the diaphragm every time you have sex, you can reuse the diaphragm).
- You want a birth control method that can be used while breastfeeding.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You find it too difficult to insert and are uncomfortable touching your vagina.
- The diaphragm doesn't fit your body properly or often moves out of place during sex.
- You don't want to leave this product in after sex (It needs to be left in for at least 6 hours after sex to ensure effectiveness).
- The contraceptive gel or spermicide irritates your skin.
- You want to easily hide the birth control you are using from those around you.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).

Spermicide



Spermicidal films, gels, or foams contain a chemical called nonoxynol-9. When this chemical is inserted into the vagina before penis and vagina sex it can help stop sperm from passing through the cervix which prevents pregnancy.

HOW DO I GET IT?

You can purchase spermicide at a pharmacy without a prescription for approximately \$15-\$17 in Ottawa (which covers a tube of foam or a box of 9 films). Spermicide can sometimes be found on the shelves of a pharmacy near the condoms. If not, pharmacies can often order spermicide into the store for you. One of the most common brand names of spermicide found in Ottawa is VCF.

HOW DO I USE IT?

Each spermicide will have slightly different directions (like waiting 10 minutes after inserting into the vagina before sex), so ensure that you read the instructions and check the expiry date before use. Generally speaking, you insert the film, gel or foam into the vagina as far up as you can reach. For many spermicides, you have to re-insert more if you continue to have sex after an hour. Leave the spermicide inside the vagina after sex to ensure it kills all the sperm.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want a method that provides extra lubrication.
- You want or need a birth control method that does not contain hormones.
- You don't want to talk to a healthcare provider.
- You are comfortable picking up this form of birth control at a pharmacy.

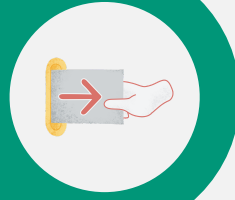
- You want a birth control method that can be used while breastfeeding.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You or your partner are worried about an allergic reaction or skin irritation from the spermicide.
- You do not want a method that can be messy.
- You do not like the unpleasant taste during sex.
- You want birth control that is more than 72% effective with typical use by itself (You can use condoms with spermicide to increase its overall effectiveness of reducing a pregnancy risk.)
- You are worried about STIs (sexually transmitted infections) (Frequent use of spermicide can cause skin irritation which can make it easier for STIs to be transmitted.)



Withdrawal (Pull Out Method)



Withdrawal, or the pull out method, is when someone pulls the penis out of the vagina before ejaculation (which contains sperm) to reduce the risk of pregnancy.

HOW DO I GET IT?

This method is just an action that the person with the penis can do to reduce the risk of pregnancy, so you don't need anything to get this method! It does require that the person understand their body, and is dedicated to pulling out before ejaculation.

HOW DO I USE IT?

The person with the penis pulls out of the vagina before ejaculation. This method requires self control as any ejaculation in the vagina can risk a pregnancy.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You do not want a method that uses hormones.
- You don't want to talk to a healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- You want a method that is free.
- You want a method that is safe to use while breastfeeding.
- You want to use this method in combination with other forms of birth control to increase the overall effectiveness of preventing pregnancy.



YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You cannot talk to your partner about birth control.
- You are worried that your partner will not be able to withdraw at the appropriate time.
- You think it will be difficult to withdraw at the appropriate time.
- You want a method that is more than 80% effective.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).

Avoiding Penis-in-Vagina Sex



Not having penis-in-vagina sex is one way you can reduce your risk of pregnancy. While sex can include many activities, the only activity that can result in a pregnancy is penis and vagina sex. Therefore, avoiding specifically penis in vagina sex can be a form of birth control.

HOW DO I GET IT?

You don't need any specific device or item to use this method. However, for this method to work you and your partner need to feel comfortable enough to talk about this method and agree that you won't have penis in vagina sex.

HOW DO I USE IT?

If you are considering using this method as a form of birth control, here are a few questions you and your partner might find helpful to think about before deciding on this method.

- Are there any sexual activities I am interested in and comfortable in having right now?
- Are there any sexual activities my partner is interested in and comfortable having right now?
- What kind of sexual activities do you and your partner want to avoid at this time?
- If my partner and I decide to do some sexual activities, do you feel confident in your ability to avoid penis in vagina sex?
- If my partner and I decide to do some sexual activities, do you feel confident in *your partner's* ability to avoid penis in vagina sex?



YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want to learn more about your partner before having penis in vagina sex.
- You don't want to, or don't feel ready to have penis in vagina sex for any reason (this could include personal, cultural, or religious reasons).
- You want a method that is free.
- You don't want to talk to a healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- You want or need a birth control method that does not contain hormones.
- You feel like you can stick to a decision and want a method that is highly effective.
- If you also avoid oral and anal, this method can significantly reduce your risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) as well.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want to have penis in vagina sex.
- You are unsure if you will be able to always avoid penis in vagina sex.
- You can't rely on or don't feel confident in your partner's ability to avoid penis in vagina sex.

Fertility Awareness Method



The fertility awareness method (FAM) works by tracking when you ovulate and menstruate, and avoiding penis and vagina sex on the days in which a pregnancy can occur.

HOW DO I GET IT?

For this method you will need: a good understanding of your menstrual cycle (which includes when you ovulate and menstruate), comfort and dedication to tracking daily changes in your cervical mucus, your resting temperature (otherwise known as your basal body temperature), and/or your menstrual period. To keep track of all this information over time, you can use a notebook or free digital apps. To check your temperature, you can purchase a thermometer at many pharmacies from the shelves.

HOW DO I USE IT?

After ovulation, an egg can survive for around 24 hours, and sperm can survive around 5 days inside a body after sex. Therefore in order to avoid pregnancy, you would have to avoid sex 5 days before ovulation, and 24 hours after the release of an egg. To track when ovulation happens you can:

- If you have a regular menstrual period, track when you have a period which can tell you when your menstrual cycle is restarting.
- Track the temperature of your body after you wake up, but before you get out of bed which can help you determine when ovulation has happened.
- Check if the mucus coming from your cervix is more clear and slippery, which is an indication that you are more fertile.

Every person's menstrual cycle is different, and a person's menstrual cycle can change monthly for a variety of common reasons. Therefore in order for this method to be as effective as possible, it's important to practice for many months before using this as a form of birth control and to track more than one change in your body (the more changes you track, the more effective this method will be.)

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want a method that is mostly free (except for the cost of the thermometer)
- You don't want to or can't add any hormones or items to your body.
- You want to better understand your body and your menstrual cycle.
- This method can help you later if you ever decide you want to be pregnant.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You find it difficult or uncomfortable to track any or all of the changes in your body required.
- You worry about the diverse range of effectiveness with this method (this method can be between 76-98% depending on how a person uses the method.)
- You and/or your partner don't think you will always be able to avoid sex on the days in which pregnancy is likely to happen
- You have very irregular periods.
- You find the information needed to make this method effective overwhelming.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce the risk of STIs).

Breastfeeding Chestfeeding



Breast/chest feeding after birth can also be a form of birth control. This form of birth control is sometimes called the lactational amenorrhea method (LAM). When done following specific guidelines, breast/chest feeding can tell your body to stop ovulating which reduces your risk of pregnancy.

HOW DO I GET IT?

If you have just given birth, are only breast/chest feed (in other words, don't use any bottles, formula, or food), haven't gotten a period, and it's been less than 6 months since giving birth, you have all you need to use this as a form of birth control.

HOW DO I USE IT?

You must breast/chest feed a minimum of every 4 hours during the day and 6 hours at night. This is because every time your baby breast/chest feeds, hormones are released that tell your body to stop ovulating.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

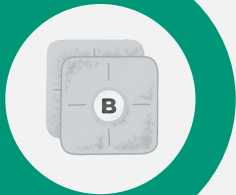
- You want a method that reduces the risk of pregnancy by 98% with typical use.
- You are already regularly breast/chest feeding only.
- You haven't had a period and it's been less than 6 months since giving birth.
- You want a method that is free.
- You want a method where you don't have to talk to a healthcare provider or pharmacist.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You can't breastfeed/chest feed every 4 hours during the day, and 6 hours at night.
- It's been more than 6 months since giving birth.
- Your period has started again.
- You want to or are using a mix of feeding methods (including, formula and food).
- You cannot always breast/chest feed (in other words, sometimes you feed your baby using a bottle).
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).



Plan B



“Plan B” is just one brand name for the over-the-counter emergency birth control. This is also sometimes called “the morning after pill”. There are many other brand names of the pill that are just as effective and are usually cheaper than “Plan B.” Over-the-counter emergency birth control can be used after sex to prevent a pregnancy. This pill (or sometimes two pills) works by preventing ovulation, specifically delaying the development of an egg.

HOW DO I GET IT?

You can access this type of emergency birth control without a prescription. Sometimes you can pick it up on the shelves at a pharmacy or ask a pharmacist for it if they store it behind the counter. While it’s common for pharmacists to share some basic information on Plan B, it’s very uncommon for a pharmacist to refuse to give you Plan B (or equivalent). If a pharmacist does this, they are required to provide you with another location where you can access Plan B (or equivalent). Ultimately, you have the right to access emergency birth control.

HOW DO I USE IT?

Take the pill(s) as soon as possible after the sex you are worried about. Plan B (or equivalent) is most effective if taken within 2 days (48 hours) after sex, but can be taken up until 3 days (72 hours) after. Sometimes Plan B (or equivalent) can make you nauseous. If you happen to throw up two hours after you take the pill(s), ask a pharmacist for advice on next steps. If you are still worried about a potential pregnancy, you can contact our team at Planned Parenthood Ottawa for extra information and support.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You don’t want to be pregnant and your birth control method failed
- You don’t want to be pregnant and you didn’t use birth control, or you weren’t able to use birth control
- You are uncertain if your birth control worked and you want the extra assurance of using an emergency form of birth control
- You can easily find Plan B (or equivalent) at your local pharmacy or feel comfortable asking a pharmacist for the product
- It has been less than 72 hours since the sex you are worried about
- You can afford the approximately \$30-40 cost of the pill

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You are nervous about feeling nauseous or throwing up after (Some people who take Plan B [or equivalent] feel nauseous after but the nausea is temporary)
- You don’t want your period to be late (Plan B [or equivalent] can delay when you have your period for a couple of days. While this is temporary and normal, some people get very nervous when this happens).
- You have a high Body Mass Index (or BMI). (There is debate within the research about whether or not Plan B (or equivalent) might be less effective for those with a higher BMI. While it’s certainly not harmful specifically for people with a higher BMI, if you are worried about the effectiveness you can use another form of emergency birth control).
- You cannot or do not want to use a hormonal method of emergency birth control.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce the risk of STIs).

Ella



“Ella” is one type of “morning after pill” or emergency birth control that can be used after sex to prevent pregnancy before it happens. Ella helps to stop ovulation (an egg from releasing) which can prevent a pregnancy.

HOW DO I GET IT?

How do I get it? Ella needs to be prescribed by a healthcare provider, and then you can go to a pharmacy with your prescription to pick up the pill. Without any form of insurance, Ella can cost around \$50 in Ottawa.

HOW DO I USE IT?

Take the pill as soon as possible after the sex you are worried about, but no later than 5 days (or 120 hours) after sex. If you are still worried about a potential pregnancy, you can contact our team at Planned Parenthood Ottawa for extra information and support.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

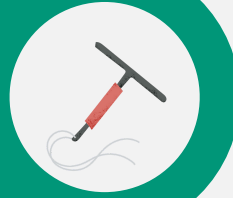
- You don't want to be pregnant and, your birth control method failed
- You don't want to be pregnant and you didn't use birth control, or you weren't able to use birth control
- You are uncertain if your birth control worked and you want the extra assurance of using an emergency form of birth control
- It's been more than 48 hours since the sex you are worried about and you want something more effective than Plan B

- You are comfortable asking a healthcare provider for a prescription and going to a pharmacy.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You can't access a healthcare provider who can prescribe Ella to you within 5 days
- You are nervous about feeling nauseous or throwing up after taking Ella (Some people who take Ella feel nauseous after but the nausea is temporary)
- You don't want your period to be late (Ella can delay when you have your period for a couple of days. While this is temporary and normal, some people get very nervous when this happens).
- You are worried that Ella might temporarily reduce the effectiveness of your hormonal birth control (The healthcare provider who prescribes Ella to you can assess if this applies to you and talk you through how else you might be able to reduce a pregnancy risk if Ella does temporarily impact your hormonal birth control).
- You have a high Body Mass Index (or BMI). (There is debate within the research about whether or not Ella might be less effective for those with a higher BMI. While it's certainly not harmful specifically for people with a higher BMI, if you are worried about the effectiveness you can use another form of emergency birth control).
- You cannot or do not want to use a hormonal method of emergency birth control.
- You have no insurance or other way to pay the cost of approximately \$50.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).

Copper Intrauterine Device (IUD)



The copper IUD is a small T-shaped device that is inserted by a healthcare provider into the uterus to prevent pregnancy. Attached to the IUD are two threads that hang down past the cervix (the opening to the uterus) and into the top of the vagina. The copper IUD can also be used as a form of emergency birth control for 5-7 days after sex to prevent a pregnancy before it happens.

HOW DO I GET IT?

A copper IUD is prescribed by a health care provider and then you often will go to a pharmacy to pick up the IUD. In Ottawa the copper IUD costs approximately \$80-\$200 without any insurance. With the IUD, you will book a follow up appointment with a healthcare provider who can insert the IUD into your cervix. Insertion usually takes a couple of minutes.

HOW DO I USE IT?

Once you have an IUD inserted, it can stay in your uterus for up to 3, 5 or 10 years depending on which model of copper IUD you get. Over the years, a healthcare provider will sometimes check the placement of the IUD using an ultrasound or by looking at the strings of the IUD.

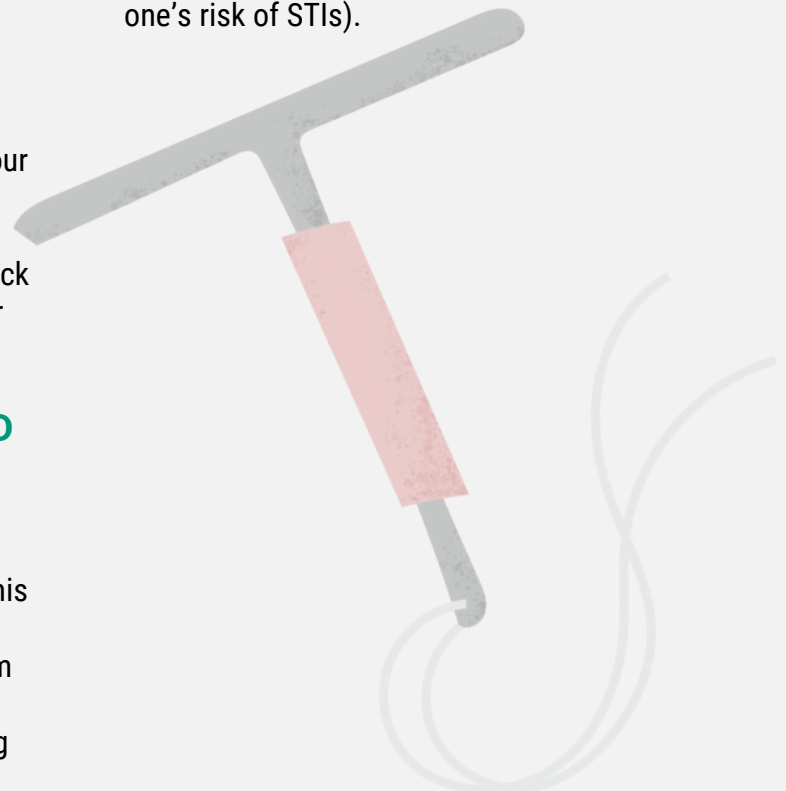
YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You want a method that reduces the risk of pregnancy by 99%
- You like that you only have to think about this method once every 3, 5, or 10 years.
- You want a method that is easy to hide from others.
- You want a method that is cheap in the long term.

- You want or need an emergency form of birth control.
- You want or need a form of birth control that does not have hormones.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You do not want the cramping and discomfort of an IUD insertion and removal.
- You are worried about the rare cases where the IUD moves out of place.
- You are worried about the increased menstrual bleeding and cramping that can come with the copper IUD.
- You want to be pregnant within the next 3, 5, or 10 years.
- You have no insurance or other way to pay the cost of \$80-\$100 up front.
- You are unable to find a health care provider that can prescribe and insert the device within the 7 days needed to use it as a form of emergency birth control.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).



Vasectomy



A vasectomy is a simple and permanent procedure done by a healthcare provider to prevent pregnancy. A vasectomy stops sperm from leaving the testicles by surgically blocking or removing part of the tube that carries sperm from the testes. This tube is called the vas deferens.

HOW DO I GET IT?

Many healthcare providers can provide this procedure since it can be done in a doctor's office with minimal numbing and while the person is awake. However, not all healthcare providers are trained to do this procedure. If your primary healthcare provider does not provide this procedure you can ask for a referral to a healthcare provider who does. After you are referred, the healthcare provider will talk to you about what to expect and then meet with you in person to complete the procedure. This procedure usually takes around 20 minutes to be completed.

HOW DO I USE IT?

After the procedure is done, a healthcare provider will test to ensure that no sperm is exiting the penis. Once a healthcare provider confirms that the procedure has worked, this birth control method is 99% effective at reducing the risk of pregnancy. While healthcare providers can try to reverse the procedure, it is expensive and not always possible to do so. Therefore, this method is often best suited to people who feel that they are certain that they never want to get a person pregnant.

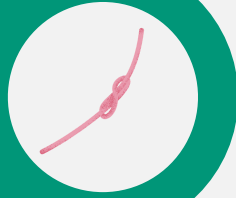
YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You never want to get a person pregnant.
- After the procedure is done, you don't want to think about using birth control to prevent pregnancy again.
- You want a method that is 99% effective at reducing the risk of pregnancy.
- You want a method that is easy to hide from others.
- You want a method that can be cheap (if you have an Ontario Health Insurance Card [OHIP] or another type of insurance, the procedure can often be very cheap or free).
- You are comfortable having a healthcare provider perform this procedure for you.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You might want to get someone pregnant in the future.
- You are uncomfortable with getting the procedure done.
- You are unable to find a healthcare provider who can provide you with this procedure (if you need support in finding a healthcare provider you can contact Planned Parenthood Ottawa for more information).
- You have no way of covering the cost of the procedure.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).

Tubal Ligation



A tubal ligation is a permanent surgical procedure that can be done by a healthcare provider to stop an egg from reaching a sperm in the fallopian tube. This procedure is also sometimes called sterilization. There are a few different ways that a healthcare provider can do this, but some of the ways include blocking or tying the fallopian tubes.

HOW DO I GET IT?

A primary health care provider can refer you to a specialist who can do this procedure. After you are referred, the healthcare provider will talk to you about what to expect and then meet with you in person to complete the procedure. Since the fallopian tubes are inside the body, this procedure is often done inside a hospital where they can put you to sleep for the procedure (also called general anesthesia).

HOW DO I USE IT?

After the procedure is done you will likely feel some discomfort but should be able to resume all your regular activities within a few days to a weeks time. The healthcare provider who does the procedure will talk you through what to expect. This birth control method is around 99% effective at reducing the risk of pregnancy depending on the surgical method used. If you are concerned, you can ask your healthcare provider about the surgical method they will use and its effectiveness. This method is permanent and therefore best suited to people who feel that they are certain that they never want to be pregnant.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You never want to get pregnant.
- After the procedure is done, you don't want to think about using birth control to prevent pregnancy again.
- You want a method that is 99% effective at reducing the risk of pregnancy.
- You want a method that is easy to hide from others.
- You want a method that can be cheap (if you have an Ontario Health Insurance Card [OHIP] or another type of insurance, the procedure can often be very cheap to free).
- You are comfortable having a healthcare provider perform this procedure for you.

YOU MIGHT NOT CHOOSE THIS METHOD IF...

- You might want to get someone pregnant in the future.
- You are uncomfortable with getting the procedure done.
- You are unable to find a healthcare provider who can provide you with this procedure (if you need support in finding a healthcare provider you can contact Planned Parenthood Ottawa for more information).
- You have no way of covering the cost of the procedure.
- You are looking for a method that also reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections (this method does not reduce one's risk of STIs).

Notes



What is important to you when looking for a birth control option?

What other questions do you have about your birth control options?

Notes



