## Choosing a method: What matters most to me?

### Method Type
- Contraceptive Device
- Intra-uterine Device
- Implant
- Male Condoms
- Progestin-Only PILL
- Male Condoms (Latex and Polyurethane)
- Female Condoms

### What is it?
- **Small, plastic device that is inserted under the skin.**
- **The hormone progesterone prevents an egg from being released.**
- **The tubes are permanently and surgically closed.**
- **A plastic cover that catches ejaculate; to be effective at preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, a condom must be used correctly.**
- **The patch and ring deliver hormones that women make naturally but when they are given in constant dose, the ovary does not produce an egg.**

### Strong Points
- **Very effective, safe, and forgettable.**
- **Use for 3 years but can remove anytime.**
- **Very effective, safe, and forgettable.**
- **Implant is safe for almost all women to use.**
- **Will lessen bleeding and cramping, make periods more regular.**
- **Safe to use after having a baby and when breastfeeding.**
- **Safe to use after having a baby and when breastfeeding.**

### What have you heard?
- **Very effective. Very effective.**
- **Almost all women can safely use this method.**
- **Very safe.**
- **Very safe.**
- **Will lessen bleeding and cramping, make periods more regular.**
- **Safe are for almost all women.**
- **Can cause weight gain.**

### Other Considerations
- **Expect spotting and irregular bleeding during the first 6 months; with continued use, you are very likely to have no bleeding or periods.**
- **Can improve acne and decrease PMS.**
- **Very effective.**
- **Irregular bleeding is common and expected in the first 6 months: with continued use, you are very likely to have no bleeding or periods.**
- **Can improve acne and decrease PMS.**

### Cost
- Varies, but all methods are less costly than pregnancy.

### Privacy
- How private does my method need to be?

### Convenience
- How often do I need to think about it?

### Other Benefits
- Methods reduce bleeding/cramping.

## Birth Control Options: Choose a method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method Type</th>
<th>What is it?</th>
<th>Strong Points</th>
<th>What have you heard? Here are the facts:</th>
<th>Other Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levonorgestrel IUS (Mirena)</td>
<td>Small, plastic device that is inserted under the skin.</td>
<td>- Very effective, safe, and forgettable.</td>
<td>- IUDs are safe for women of all ages and women who have not had children.</td>
<td>- Expect spotting and irregular bleeding during the first 6 months; with continued use, you are very likely to have no bleeding or periods.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copper T IUD (ParaGard)</td>
<td>The hormone progesterone inside the implant prevents an egg from being released.</td>
<td>- Very effective, safe, and forgettable.</td>
<td>- IUDs are often the preferred method for women with medical conditions (like high blood pressure).</td>
<td>- Having no periods (or very light periods) is an expected benefit of this method and not a cause for concern, the progestin in the IUD keeps the lining of the uterus very thin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implanon</td>
<td>Small, plastic rod that is inserted under the skin.</td>
<td>- Very effective, safe, and forgettable.</td>
<td>- Implant is safe for almost all women to use.</td>
<td>- Some women may have heavier periods with the Copper IUD, especially in the first year: this usually improves with time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Condoms</td>
<td>The tubes are permanently and surgically closed.</td>
<td>- Permanent method for women/men who no longer want to have children.</td>
<td>- Sterilization is a permanent method and not reversible.</td>
<td>- Some women have irregular and frequent bleeding, some women have no bleeding at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Condoms</td>
<td>Male vasectomy</td>
<td>- Male vasectomy does not change sexual performance.</td>
<td>- Surgical procedure is required, check with your clinic to connect with a trained provider.</td>
<td>- May regret the decision to be permanently sterilized, if young or not in a long term relationship should strongly consider an alternative, reversible method.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depo-Provera</td>
<td>An injection every 3 months.</td>
<td>- No pills, no trips to the pharmacy; instead, go to your provider every 3 months for an injection.</td>
<td>- Very safe. All almost women can safely use this method.</td>
<td>- Irregular bleeding is common and expected in the first 6 months; with continued use, you are very likely to have no bleeding or periods.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PILL</td>
<td>A pill; take each day.</td>
<td>- Will lessen bleeding and cramping, make periods more regular.</td>
<td>- Are safe for almost all women.</td>
<td>- Some women will have an increased appetite while they use Depo and may gain weight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patch</td>
<td>A skin patch; change each week</td>
<td>- Can improve acne and decrease PMS.</td>
<td>- Do not cause weight gain.</td>
<td>- Weight gain can be managed with diet and exercise, but you may also want to consider another method if you are gaining too much weight while on Depo.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>A vaginal ring; change each month</td>
<td>- Can be used for menstrual suppression (extend periods to every few months or have no scheduled bleeding).</td>
<td>- Do not cause miscarriage.</td>
<td>- Common side effects include irregular spotting and bleeding, sore breasts, and mild stomach upset. These may occur in the first 1-3 months of use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progestin-Only PILL</td>
<td>A pill that contains the hormone progesterone.</td>
<td>- Safe to use after having a baby and when breastfeeding.</td>
<td>- Do not cause breast cancer (and actually reduce the risk of ovarian and uterine cancer).</td>
<td>- Common side effects include irregular spotting and bleeding, sore breasts, and mild stomach upset. These may occur in the first 1-3 months of use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Condoms (Latex and Polyurethane)</td>
<td>A plastic cover that catches sperm and prevents genital skin contact.</td>
<td>- Only method that prevents sexually transmitted infections/HIV.</td>
<td>- Asking your partner to use a condom does not mean that you mistrust them or are &quot;easy&quot;.</td>
<td>- Surgical procedure is required, check with your clinic to connect with a trained provider.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Condoms</td>
<td>The sperm stay in the condom and do not get inside a woman's vagina.</td>
<td>- Safe to use after having a baby and when breastfeeding.</td>
<td>- Condoms protect your health and the health of your partner.</td>
<td>- Some men and women may not want to use condoms because it doesn't feel romantic, or &quot;it doesn’t feel good&quot;; try different condoms (textures, sizes) and use lubrication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## For more information, see the HealthTeamWorks website: [www.healthteamworks.org](http://www.healthteamworks.org)