

Consumer-Friendly Birth Control Information

This new, easy-to-understand table from FDA compares the effectiveness of birth control methods. FDA is working with manufacturers to include the table in the patient information for all contraceptive products. (See also "Protecting Against Unintended Pregnancy: A Guide to Contraceptive Choices" in the April 1997 *FDA Consumer*.)

Pregnancy Rates for Birth Control Methods

(For One Year of Use)

The following table provides estimates of the percent of women likely to become pregnant while using a particular contraceptive method for one year. These estimates are based on a variety of studies.

"**Typical Use**" rates mean that the method either was *not always used correctly* or was *not used with every act of sexual intercourse* (e.g., sometimes forgot to take a birth control pill as directed and became pregnant), or was *used correctly but failed anyway*.

"**Lowest Expected**" rates mean that the method was *always used correctly with every act of sexual intercourse* but *failed anyway* (e.g., always took a birth control pill as directed but still became pregnant).

| Method | Typical Use Rate of Pregnancy | Lowest Expected Rate of Pregnancy |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Sterilization: | | |
| Male Sterilization | 0.15% | 0.1% |
| Female Sterilization | 0.5% | 0.5% |
| Hormonal Methods: | | |
| Implant (<i>Norplant</i>) | 0.09% | 0.09% |
| Hormone Shot (<i>Depo-Provera</i>) | 0.3% | 0.3% |
| Combined Pill (<i>Estrogen/Progestin</i>) | 5% | 0.1% |
| Minipill (<i>Progestin only</i>) | 5% | 0.5% |
| Intrauterine Devices (IUDs): | | |
| Copper T | 0.8% | 0.6% |
| Progesterone T | 2% | 1.5% |
| Barrier Methods: | | |
| Male Latex Condom ¹ | 14% | 3% |
| Diaphragm ² | 20% | 6% |
| Vaginal Sponge (<i>no previous births</i>) ³ | 20% | 9% |
| Vaginal Sponge (<i>previous births</i>) ³ | 40% | 20% |
| Cervical Cap (<i>no previous births</i>) ² | 20% | 9% |
| Cervical Cap (<i>previous births</i>) ² | 40% | 26% |
| Female Condom | 21% | 5% |
| Spermicide: | | |
| (<i>gel, foam, suppository, film</i>) | 26% | 6% |
| Natural Methods: | | |
| Withdrawal | 19% | 4% |
| Natural Family Planning (<i>calendar, temperature, cervical mucus</i>) | 25% | 1-9% |
| No Method: | 85% | 85% |

1 Used Without Spermicide

2 Used With Spermicide

3 Contains Spermicide