



Category	Types	How it prevents pregnancy	Benefits	Limitations	% unintended pregnancies within 1 year
Barrier methods	Male condoms	Prevents fertilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Used only during intercourse</li><li>Reduces STI transmission</li><li>Rarely side effects from use</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Can break, split or tear during use</li><li>May interrupt intercourse</li><li>Need correct technique for using condoms</li><li>Some patients allergic to latex condoms</li></ul>	18%
	Female condoms	Prevents fertilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Used only during intercourse</li><li>Reduces STI transmission</li><li>Rarely side effects from use</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Can break, split or tear during use</li><li>May interrupt intercourse</li><li>Need correct technique for using condoms</li><li>Not as widely available as male condoms.</li></ul>	12%
	Diaphragm	Prevents fertilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Used only during intercourse</li><li>Can be placed advanced of intercourse</li><li>Rarely side effects from use</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Can break, split or tear during use</li><li>May interrupt intercourse</li><li>Need correct technique for using a diaphragm</li><li>Does not protect against STIs</li></ul>	12%
Combined contraceptives	Combined oral contraceptive pill (COCP)	Inhibits ovulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Does not interrupt intercourse</li><li>Can be stopped at short notice</li><li>May make periods more regular, lighter and less painful</li><li>May reduce the risk of ovarian, endometrial and bowel cancer</li><li>May have therapeutic benefits in gynaecological disorders</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Effectiveness reduced if pill forgotten</li><li>Side effects may include headaches, nausea and breast tenderness</li><li>Vomiting and diarrhoea may affect effectiveness</li><li>Certain drugs may affect effectiveness</li><li>Increases the risk of VTE and stroke</li><li>Potentially an increased risk of breast cancer while using the COCP</li><li>Does not protect from STIs</li></ul>	9%

Patch	Inhibits ovulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not need to remember daily</li> <li>• Does not interrupt intercourse</li> <li>• Can be stopped at short notice</li> <li>• May make periods more regular, lighter and less painful</li> <li>• May reduce the risk of ovarian, endometrial and bowel cancer</li> <li>• Vomiting and diarrhoea do not affect effectiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection from pregnancy affected if patch not changed or falls off</li> <li>• Side effects may include headaches, nausea and breast tenderness</li> <li>• Certain drugs may affect effectiveness</li> <li>• Increases the risk of VTE and stroke</li> <li>• Potentially an increased risk of breast cancer while using</li> <li>• Does not protect from STIs</li> </ul>	9%
Vaginal ring	Inhibits ovulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not need to remember daily</li> <li>• Does not interrupt intercourse</li> <li>• Can be stopped at short notice</li> <li>• May make periods more regular, lighter and less painful</li> <li>• May reduce the risk of ovarian, endometrial and bowel cancer</li> <li>• Vomiting and diarrhoea do not affect effectiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Side effects may include headaches, nausea and breast tenderness</li> <li>• Certain drugs may affect protection</li> <li>• Increases the risk of VTE and stroke</li> <li>• Potentially an increased risk of breast cancer while using</li> <li>• Does not protect from STIs</li> </ul>	9%

Progesterone only contraceptives	Progesterone only pill (POP)	Prevents ovulation, fertilisation and implantation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable for patients who cannot take oestrogen</li> <li>• Taken without breaks so do not have to remember to start/stop</li> <li>• Does not interrupt intercourse</li> <li>• Can be stopped at short notice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection from pregnancy affected if forgotten</li> <li>• May cause irregular bleeding, amenorrhoea or more frequent bleeding</li> <li>• Vomiting and diarrhoea may affect protection</li> <li>• Certain drugs may affect effectiveness</li> <li>• Does not protect from STIs</li> </ul>	9%
	Injection	Inhibits ovulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable for patients who cannot take oestrogen</li> <li>• Do not need to remember daily</li> <li>• Does not interrupt intercourse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May cause irregular bleeding, amenorrhoea or more frequent bleeding</li> <li>• Patient needs to tolerate injections</li> <li>• Effectiveness reduced if next injection late</li> <li>• Can affect bone mineral density if used long term</li> <li>• Certain drugs may affect effectiveness</li> <li>• Does not protect from STIs</li> </ul>	6%
Long acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs)	Implant	Inhibit ovulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It lasts for 3 years</li> <li>• Suitable for those who cannot use oestrogen</li> <li>• Very effective in preventing pregnancy</li> <li>• Does not interrupt intercourse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May cause irregular bleeding, amenorrhoea or more frequent bleeding</li> <li>• Can cause or worsen acne</li> <li>• Procedure to fit and remove it which has a risk of bruising and infection</li> <li>• Does not protect from STIs</li> </ul>	0.05%
	Hormonal coil	Prevents fertilisation and implantation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It lasts for 3 or 5 years</li> <li>• Suitable for those who cannot take oestrogen</li> <li>• Very effective in preventing pregnancy</li> <li>• Does not interrupt intercourse</li> <li>• More likely than the implant to reduce heavy menstruation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can make menstruation irregular and can cause amenorrhoea</li> <li>• Can cause acne, headaches and breast tenderness</li> <li>• Procedure to fit and remove it which some find too painful to tolerate and has a risk of infection and uterine perforation</li> <li>• Can be expelled from the uterus</li> <li>• If pregnancy occurs, more likely to be ectopic</li> <li>• Does not protect from STIs</li> </ul>	0.2%

	Copper coil	Prevents fertilisation and implantation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It lasts for 10 years</li> <li>• Suitable for women who cannot use hormonal contraceptives</li> <li>• Very effective contraception</li> <li>• Does not interrupt intercourse</li> <li>• Effectiveness unaffected by other medications</li> <li>• Can be used as emergency contraception</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can cause heavier, longer and more painful menstruation</li> <li>• Procedure to fit and remove it which some find too painful to tolerate and has a risk of infection and uterine perforation</li> <li>• Can be expelled from the uterus</li> <li>• If pregnancy occurs, more likely to be ectopic</li> <li>• Does not protect from STIs</li> </ul>	0.8%
Sterilisation	Female sterilisation	Prevents fertilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent contraception</li> <li>• Does not interrupt intercourse</li> <li>• Does not affect hormonal levels</li> <li>• Effectiveness unaffected by other medications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carries risks of surgery</li> <li>• Many women experience pain afterwards</li> <li>• Very difficult to reverse</li> <li>• Women need to be informed that in rare cases they can still become pregnant</li> <li>• If pregnancy occurs, more likely to be ectopic</li> <li>• Does not protect from STIs</li> </ul>	0.5%
	Male sterilisation	Prevents fertilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent contraception</li> <li>• Does not interrupt intercourse</li> <li>• Less invasive and lower risk procedure than female sterilisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carries risks of surgery</li> <li>• Some men experience pain afterwards</li> <li>• Very difficult to reverse</li> <li>• Contraception should be used afterwards until semen confirmed to be sperm free</li> <li>• Does not protect from STIs</li> </ul>	0.15%
Natural family planning		Prevents fertilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No side effects</li> <li>• Acceptable to most faiths and cultures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much less effective form of contraception</li> <li>• Must avoid sex or use other contraception around time of ovulation</li> <li>• Needs daily recording of fertility signs</li> <li>• Fertility signs unreliable when breast feeding</li> <li>• Fertility signs affected by illness and stress</li> <li>• Does not protect from STIs</li> </ul>	24%