

BIRTH CONTROL CHOICES



BIRTH CONTROL CHOICES

**The Vancouver Women's
Health Collective**

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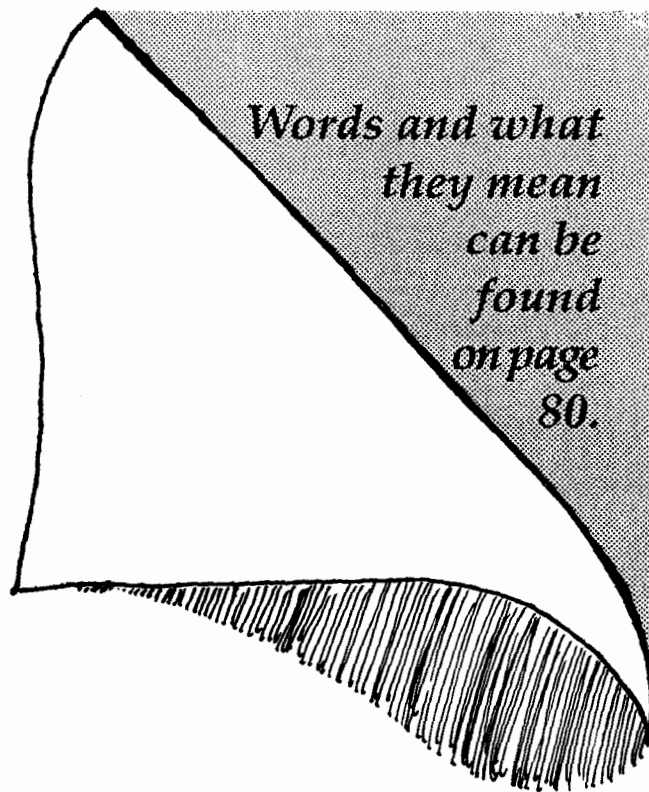
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This book was written by women at The Vancouver Women's Health Collective. We're not doctors or nurses. We've learned what we know from talking to women and from reading. It's hard to get health information. We find that reading about health and talking to other women gives us more control over our bodies. It helps us make careful, thoughtful decisions about our health. We believe all women deserve to be well informed about their health.

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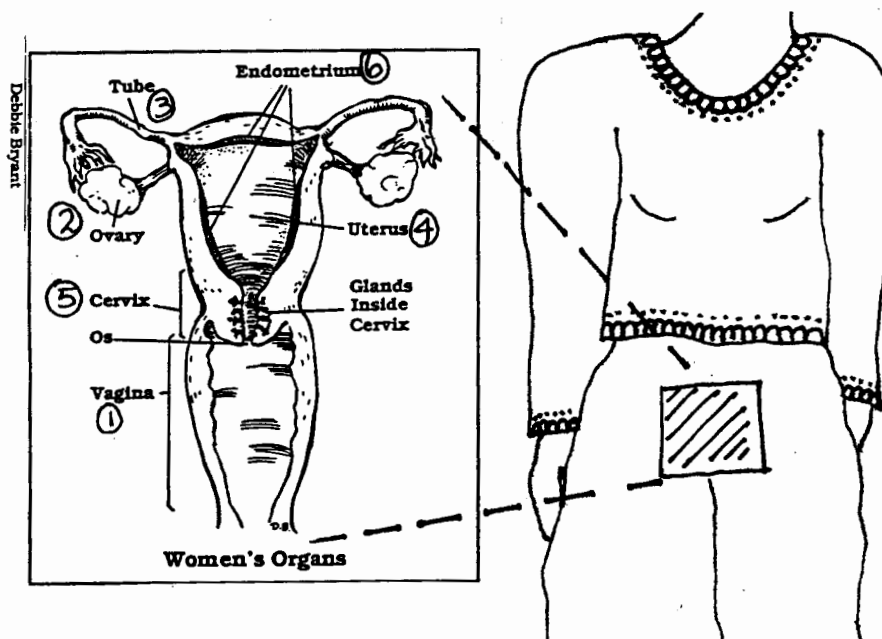
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WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

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WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

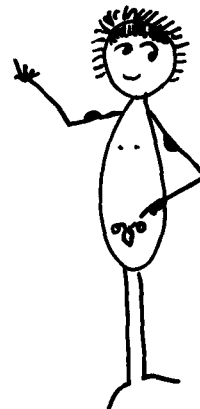


These are some of the parts of your body that make you able to have periods and get pregnant:

- 1) **Vagina:** Your vagina is a tube made of muscle. It has many folds in it which allow it to stretch.
- 2) **Ovaries:** Your 2 ovaries are the size and shape of almonds in the shell. They make the hormones estrogen and progesterone, and store your eggs.

..... WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

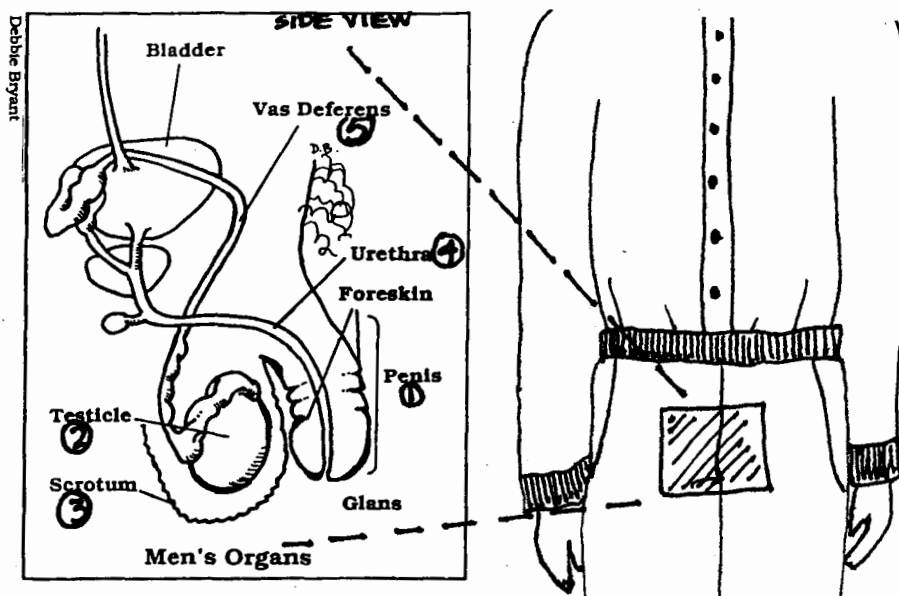
- 3) **Fallopian Tubes:** These are very thin tubes that the egg travels through from your ovary to your uterus.
- 4) **Uterus or Womb:** Your uterus is made of muscle. If you get pregnant, the fetus grows here. Your uterus is the size and shape of a small pear when you are not pregnant. It can stretch to 50 times its size to hold a developing fetus.
- 5) **Cervix:** The cervix is the bottom part of your uterus. You can feel the outside of your cervix if you put a finger far back into your vagina. Your cervix feels like the tip of your nose.
- 6) **Endometrium:** The endometrium is the inner lining of your uterus.



MEN'S REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

MEN'S REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

ORGANS



- 1) **Penis:** A man's sexual organ. When a man is sexually aroused, his penis becomes hard, this is called an erection.
- 2) **Testicles:** A man has two testicles. The testicles make sperm and hormones.
- 3) **Scrotum:** The scrotum is a sack of skin which holds a man's testicles.
- 4) **Urethra:** This is the passageway in the penis. A man's urine goes through the urethra when he urinates. The sperm also go through the urethra when a man ejaculates.
- 5) **Vas deferens:** Sperm go through these tubes to get to the urethra.
- 6) **Circumcision:** Some baby boys have the flap of skin (foreskin) on their penis cut off. This is call being circumcised.

MENSTRUATION

MENSTRUATION

Menstruation is when a woman bleeds every month. The blood is the broken down lining of your uterus which isn't needed when you're not pregnant.

Your menstrual cycle lasts from the first day of one period to the first day of your next period, usually between 21 and 45 days. Women on the pill have periods 28 days apart, because the hormones in the pill tell their bodies when their periods should be.

WHAT ARE HORMONES?

Hormones are chemicals made by organs in your body called glands. Hormones travel through your bloodstream, from one part of your body to another, telling it what to do next. Hormones control your menstrual cycle. Your brain sends the hormones through your blood to your ovaries telling them what to do.

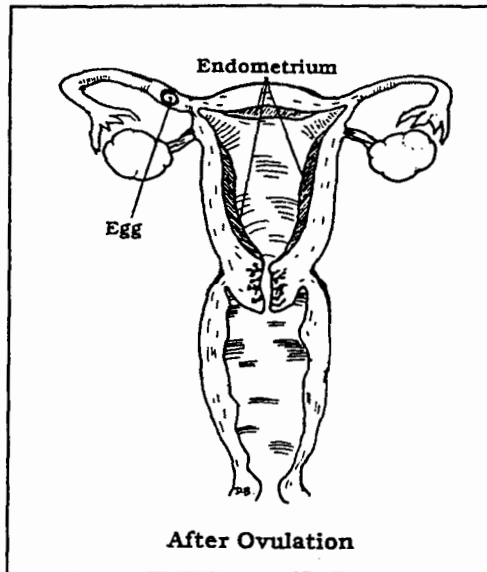
Your menstrual cycle can be changed by your feelings because the part of your brain which controls your menstrual cycle also controls your emotions by reacting to the hormones in your blood.

How do the hormones from my ovaries affect my menstrual cycle?

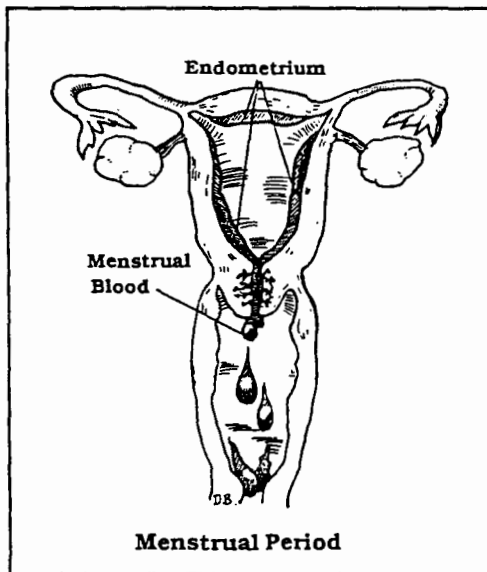
Your ovaries make two hormones, estrogen and progesterone. This is what happens in a menstrual cycle:

1. During your period your ovaries put out very little estrogen and progesterone.

MENSTRUATION



Debbie Bryant



Debbie Bryant

2. After your period, your ovaries start to put out more and more estrogen. During this time some of your eggs start to ripen. Usually only one of these eggs will become fully mature each month.

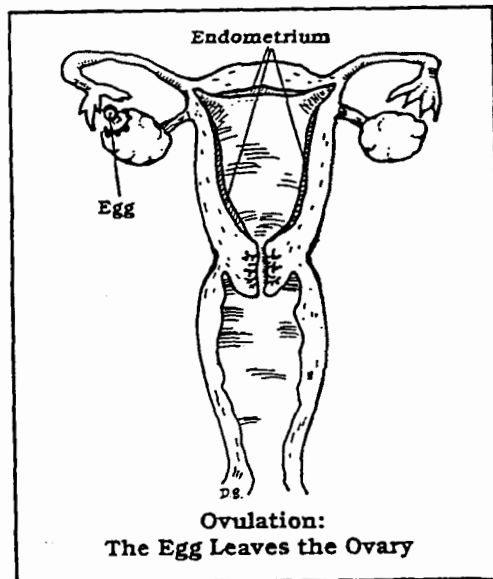
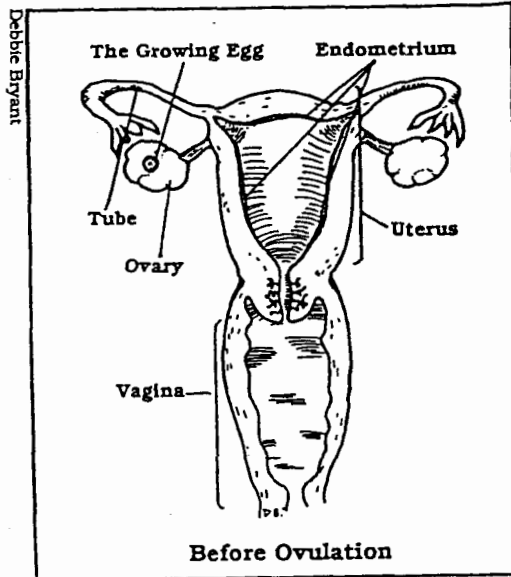
3. When you have enough estrogen in your blood, the egg pops out of your ovary. This is called ovulation. The egg goes from your ovary to your fallopian tube.

4. After ovulation, your ovary makes a lot of progesterone.

5. If you get pregnant, your body keeps making a lot of progesterone. If you don't get pregnant then it stops making as much progesterone after about two weeks.

6. When you have less progesterone in your blood, the lining of your uterus starts to break down and you get your period.

MENSTRUATION



What happens to the egg if I don't get pregnant?

The egg is very small. If it isn't fertilized, it breaks down and is absorbed by the body.

What happens if I get pregnant?

When a sperm joins an egg, they make an embryo. The embryo is the earliest stage of what will become a baby. The embryo takes about four days to travel down your fallopian tube to your uterus where it attaches itself to the side of your uterus. This happens about six days after you get pregnant. After the embryo is attached to the uterus, it starts putting out a hormone called HCG (Human Chorionic Gonadotrophin). This hormone tells your body to keep making a lot of progesterone and estrogen which stops you from having periods while you are pregnant.

YOUR REPRODUCTIVE YEARS.....

**YOUR
REPRODUCTIVE
YEARS**

PUBERTY:

The period of time when your body changes from being a child's body to being a woman's body is called puberty. It can begin any time from when you're 9 to 16 years old and last until you're 17 or 18.

THE TEENAGE YEARS:

Most girls have their first menstrual period some time between the ages of 10 and 16. It can take one or two years for your hormones to balance themselves and your cycles to become more regular.

After your first period you need to use some form of birth control if you have intercourse. If you get pregnant, it will be harder on your body than when you're older.

THE MENSTRUAL YEARS:

During the time between puberty and menopause years you'll have menstrual periods. You may have them every month, or you may go for long stretches of time without having periods. Women miss periods for many reasons. Some of the reasons include being very thin, being pregnant, being sick, travelling, being under a lot of stress, or exercising too much.

MENOPAUSE

..... MENOPAUSE (THE CHANGE OF LIFE)

Menopause is a natural stage of a woman's life which usually occurs when she is 40 - 55 years old. In the years before menopause, your periods may become less and less regular. Your ovaries produce less estrogen. When there isn't as much estrogen, the lining of your uterus doesn't grow as much and your periods become irregular. Finally, they stop altogether.

Just as periods are different with each woman, so is menopause. It can take you two years to eight years or more to go through menopause. If you are near 50 and haven't had a period for one year, then menopause is probably established. You will not be

able to get pregnant and probably won't have any more periods. You don't need to use birth control after one year without periods.



Women often notice changes around the time of menopause. You may feel sudden waves of heat spreading over part or all of your upperbody. These are called hot

flashes or flushes. You may sweat at night. Your vagina may feel less moist.

Some women find menopause easy, other women find it a difficult time. Many women say that talking to other women about the changes in their bodies and what makes them feel better helps.

SEXUALITY

Sexuality

How you feel about your body and yourself will affect how you feel about sex. Many women have trouble liking their bodies. Many have learned to please others and not pay attention to what they like when they're being sexual.

When you were a little girl, you may have been told that you were bad when you had sexual feelings. If you were one of the many girls who was sexually abused, you may have a lot of mixed feelings about sex and your body.

As an adult, you may have been forced into sex that you didn't want. You may still be in this situation. If you've had really bad experiences, you may be afraid to even talk about it. Many women have found comfort and strength through talking to other women or reading books.

It's also important to be able to talk about sex with your partner. Here are some things you could talk about:

- ❖ what you like and don't like when you're being sexual
- ❖ any ways that you are feeling pressured or insecure
- ❖ how you will protect each other from HIV, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases
- ❖ what kind of birth control you will use



No one should pressure you into having sex. You have the right not to have sex when you don't want to. Even if you are married or have been having sex with a person for a long time, you still can say no. You can also stop having sex after you started if you no longer want to have sex.

CHOOSING A BIRTH CONTROL METHOD.....



HOW TO CHOOSE A METHOD OF BIRTH CONTROL

No method of birth control is perfect. Choosing a method means weighing what's good about it against what's bad. What works best for your sister or your friend may not work as well for you. These are the methods you can choose from:

Barrier methods such as condoms, foam, a diaphragm, or a cervical cap. You use these just when you have sex.

Natural methods such as fertility awareness. These don't change your body at all.

Hormonal methods such as the birth control pill or Norplant, which change your menstrual cycle. Because they change your whole body, these methods are more likely to have side effects.

The IUD is a plastic object a doctor puts into your uterus.

Sterilization is an operation that makes you unable to have a child again.

.....**CHOOSING A BIRTH CONTROL METHOD**.....

You can get pregnant from having intercourse. You can also get pregnant if your partner's penis is not inside your vagina, but some of his semen spills near the opening of your vagina. This can happen if he ejaculates (comes) when his penis is close to your vagina, or from anal sex. You will need to use birth control to keep from getting pregnant if you're having any of these types of sex.

How well does this method work?

When we talk about how well methods work in this book, we say how many women out of 100 would get pregnant using the method for a year. A birth control method works well if 5 women or less out of 100 get pregnant using it for a year. This assumes that the 100 women were using the method **the way it's supposed to be used**. If you forget to take the birth control pill, it doesn't work well. If you don't use your diaphragm every time, it won't work very well.

Does my partner feel responsible for birth control too?

It takes a woman and a man for pregnancy to happen. Birth control should be (but is not always) a responsibility that men and women share. The method of birth control that you choose will depend on the willingness or unwillingness of your partner to participate.

HIV & AIDS

(Human immunodeficiency virus & Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)

It is important to protect yourself against every time you have sex. Knowing your partner or partners isn't enough. Anyone can have HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) or AIDS. You can't

CHOOSING A BIRTH CONTROL METHOD.....

tell by looking if someone has it. You can't tell by asking someone if they have it because they might not know if they have it or not. The only method of birth control that really helps protect you from getting HIV and AIDS from intercourse is a condom. A condom with spermicide is even better.



From: New York City Department of Health

ANYONE CAN GET AIDS OR HIV, ALWAYS USE A CONDOM.

Do I want children later on?

Good birth control shouldn't affect your fertility, or how easily you can get pregnant later on, unless you choose sterilization.

Methods which protect you against STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) help protect your fertility. STDs can lead to PID (pelvic inflammatory disease), an infection in your uterus and tubes, which can make it difficult or impossible to get pregnant. The less a method changes your whole body, the less it is likely to make you infertile.

What if I got pregnant by mistake?

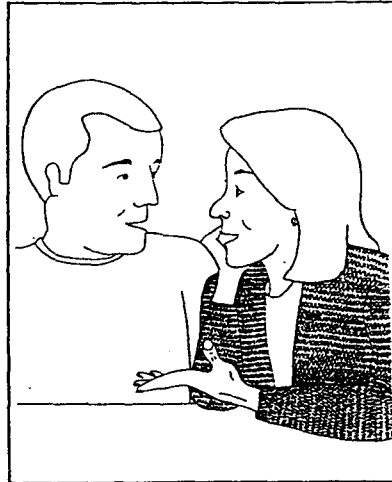
Any birth control method can fail. You can't totally guess how you would feel if you were pregnant. But it helps to think and

.....CHOOSING A BIRTH CONTROL METHOD

talk about it ahead of time.

Does My Age Matter?

Some birth control affects you differently depending on how old you are. It's best not to start taking the pill until you've had periods at least 2 years and your own hormones are balanced.



If you're over 35, the pill is more dangerous for you than for younger women. Other methods of birth control can be used no matter how old you are.

Breastfeeding

You may have heard you can't get pregnant when you're breastfeeding. This isn't true. Although you are less fertile when you are breastfeeding and not having periods, you can't guess when your first period will be. You need birth control even when you're not having periods.

Which methods should I avoid or use when breastfeeding?

If you are breast feeding, you shouldn't use the pill. The hormones from the pill will go into your milk and may harm your baby. Most pills make you have less milk.

If you use an IUD while you are breast feeding, it could poke through the wall of your uterus. This doesn't happen often, but

CHOOSING A BIRTH CONTROL METHOD.....

is dangerous.

It's better to use condoms, foam, the diaphragm or the cervical cap when you're breast feeding. They are safe methods that don't affect your milk. It can be harder to use the ovulation method or the sympto-thermal method when you're breast feeding and not having periods. Both methods can be used, but you need to learn from a teacher how to use them when breast feeding.

Will breastfeeding affect my interest in sex?

Because breastfeeding changes your hormones, you may feel less interested in sex. It can help to let your partner know that this happens to many women when they're breastfeeding. He may think you're losing interest in him. If it's your first child, he may also be jealous of the attention you're giving the baby. It can help to talk about it, and to figure out other ways of being close when you don't feel like having sex.



.....**CONDOMS.**

BARRIER METHODS

Barrier methods of birth control stop sperm from reaching your egg. They either keep the sperm from getting into your vagina or they keep them from getting up into your uterus.

If you are thinking about using a barrier method for the first time, you may want to think of how you will fit it into your lovemaking.

CONDOMS

A condom is a thin rubber covering which a man wears over his penis during intercourse.

How do condoms work?

When a man ejaculates, the sperm stay inside the condom. If no sperm get into your vagina, you can't get pregnant.

How is a condom used?

Your partner needs to have a condom on every time before his penis touches your vagina.

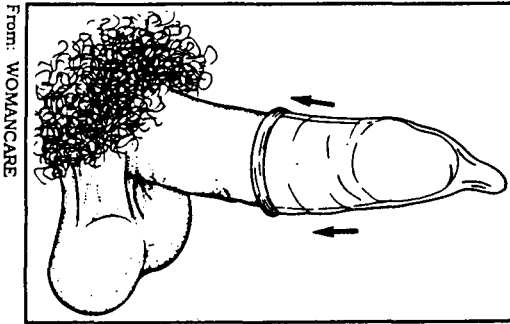
1. Keep condoms in a cool, dry place (not in a pocket or wallet for more than 1 month.)
2. Open the condom package carefully, do not tear the condom.
3. After your partners' penis becomes hard, put on the condom.
4. If the condom has a nipple tip, pinch it so it doesn't fill with air

HOW WELL DO THEY WORK?

CONDOMS WORK WELL IF THEY ARE USED PROPERLY AND ARE USED EVERY TIME. IF 100 WOMEN DEPEND ON CONDOMS FOR BIRTH CONTROL FOR A YEAR, BETWEEN 2 AND 6 WOMEN WILL GET PREGNANT.

CONDOMS

.....



when your partner puts the condom on.

5. If the condom doesn't have a nipple tip, leave an extra half inch at the tip of his penis to catch the sperm.

6. Unroll the condom onto his penis so that it covers his whole penis.

7. It's a good idea to use a lubricant, something to make the condom slippery. This helps to keep the condom from breaking. A drop of lubricant inside the tip of the condom can make it more comfortable for your partner. Put the lubricant on the outside of the condom after the condom is on. Use K-Y Jelly, or spermicide. A "pre-lubricated" condom has a lubricant on it when you buy it.

8. Don't use Vaseline, Crisco or oil on a condom. They will harm the rubber. Vaseline is also unhealthy for your vagina.

9. After your partner ejaculates, he should hold the bottom of the condom against his penis as he takes his penis out of your vagina. This way, no sperm will spill out. Be sure your partner washes the semen from his hands before touching your vagina.

10. Throw the condom in the garbage after using it once.

Can condoms harm me?

No. Some women and men are allergic to the rubber or to the lubricant or spermicide on a condom. Try using a

.....CONDOMS

different brand.

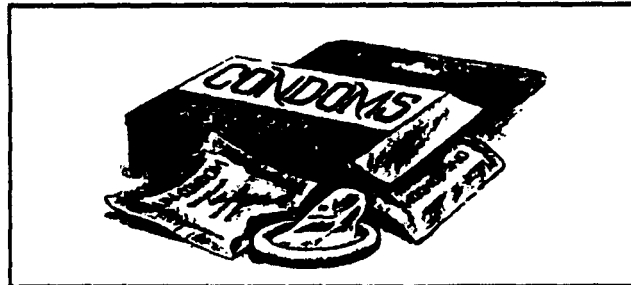
If a condom breaks, put an applicator of foam into your vagina right away. This doesn't work as well as using the foam before intercourse, but it is much better than nothing.

CAUTION!!

Natural lambskin condoms feel more comfortable than rubber ones, but they don't protect against AIDS or other STDs.

Does this method protect against STDs?

A rubber condom with spermicide gives you the best protection against AIDS, other STDs, and cancer of the cervix.

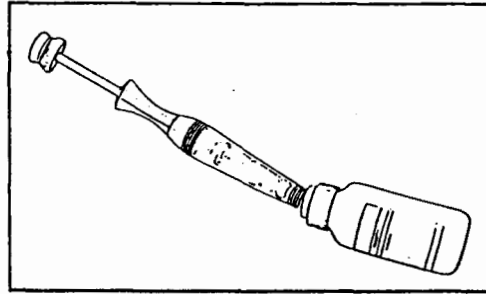


B.C. Medical Association

FOAM

FOAM

Foam is a form of spermicide which you put into your vagina before intercourse. It comes in a can with an applicator. You can buy it at any drugstore without a prescription from a doctor.



FOAM AND APPLICATOR

How does foam work?

When your partner's sperm come into contact with the foam, they are killed. The foam fills the upper part of your vagina, so that the sperm are killed before they reach your cervix.

How is foam used?

You should put the foam in your vagina no more than 30 minutes before you have sex. Use more foam each time you have intercourse.

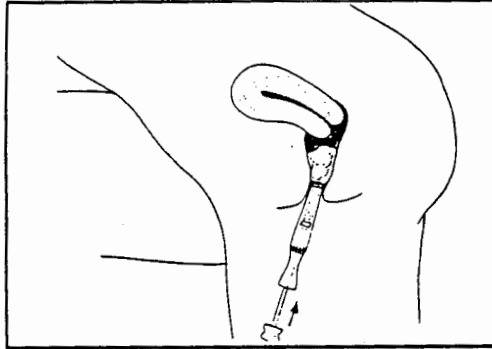
- 1) Shake the can of foam about 20 times.
- 2) Attach the applicator to the can and fill it with foam.
- 3) Foam goes in just like a tampon does. you can lie on your back, squat, or stand with one foot on a chair.
- 4) Use one hand to open the lips of your vagina and the other to put the applicator as far into your

HOW WELL DOES IT WORK?

IF 100 WOMEN USE FOAM FOR BIRTH CONTROL FOR A YEAR, ABOUT 4 WILL GET PREGNANT. THIS IS IF FOAM IS USED BY ITSELF EACH TIME A WOMAN HAS INTERCOURSE. IF YOU USE FOAM WITH A CONDOM, IT WORKS AS WELL AS THE BIRTH CONTROL PILL.

FOAM

From: MY BODY, MY HEALTH



vagina as possible.

5) Pull applicator back about 1/2 inch then press the plunger.

6) Some kinds use 2 applicators full, read the instructions on the can.

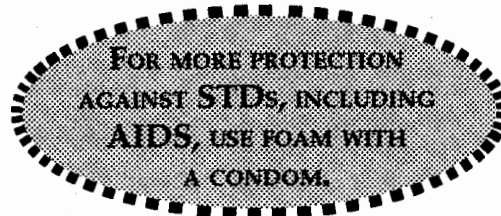
7) Leave the foam in for at least 8 hours. You can shower in this time, but do not douche or have a bath.

What problems do some women have with foam?

- ❖ If either you or your partner feels itchiness or pain, try a different brand
- ❖ The foam tastes bad.
- ❖ You may get pregnant using foam if you don't use enough foam or if you use the foam after the date on the can.

Does foam protect against STDs?

Foam protects against many types of STDs, but not as well as a condom.



CONDOMS & FOAM / THE DIAPHRAGM...

CONDOMS AND FOAM

HOW WELL DOES IT WORK?

IF 200 COUPLES USE CONDOMS AND FOAM FOR A YEAR, ONE WOMAN WILL GET PREGNANT. USE CONDOMS AND FOAM EVERY TIME YOU HAVE INTERCOURSE.

THE DIAPHRAGM

The diaphragm is a shallow round rubber cup. You use a diaphragm by putting spermicide into it and putting it into your vagina. You will need to go to a doctor or clinic to be fitted with the right size diaphragm.

You should not be able to feel your diaphragm once it is in your vagina. If you want to have intercourse during your period, the diaphragm will hold in the menstrual blood.

How does a diaphragm work?

The diaphragm covers your cervix and holds spermicide against it. If any sperm get close to your cervix, they are killed by the spermicide. Sperm need to get through the opening in your cervix to reach the egg and make you pregnant. The diaphragm only works if you use it with spermicide.

HOW WELL DOES IT WORK?

THE DIAPHRAGM WORKS VERY WELL IF YOU USE IT EVERY TIME YOU HAVE INTERCOURSE. IF 100 WOMEN USE THE DIAPHRAGM FOR A YEAR, TWO OF THEM WILL BECOME PREGNANT.

THE DIAPHRAGM

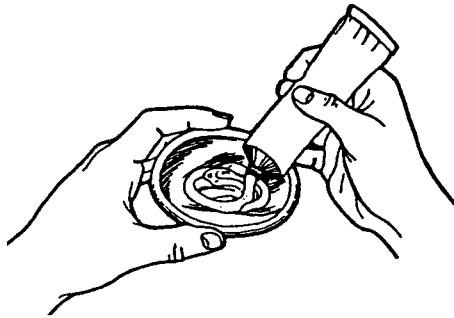
How is the diaphragm used?

You need to put the diaphragm in before you have intercourse. Put it in right before having intercourse, or up to 3 hours ahead of time. Use spermicidal jelly with it, not foam.

There are 2 ways to put in a diaphragm:

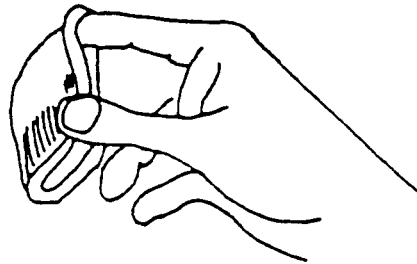
The usual way:

1. Hold your diaphragm like a cup, with the curve down. Put about 2 teaspoons of spermicide jelly in the middle of the diaphragm.



From: IT'S YOUR CHOICE

2. Hold the diaphragm closed between your thumb and forefinger. Try standing up with one foot on a chair, squatting, or lying down. Use one hand to hold your vaginal lips open while you put the diaphragm in with your other hand. This may be hard to do at first. It will get easier to do once you get some practice.
3. After your diaphragm is in, feel to make sure your cervix is covered. Put one finger in your vagina. You should be able to feel your cervix through the thin rubber of your diaphragm. It will feel kind of like the tip of your nose. It helps to first feel for your cervix before your diaphragm is in, then to feel for it again through the dia-

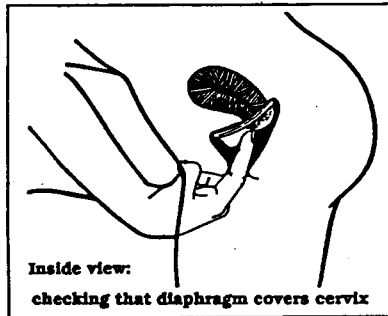


THE DIAPHRAGM

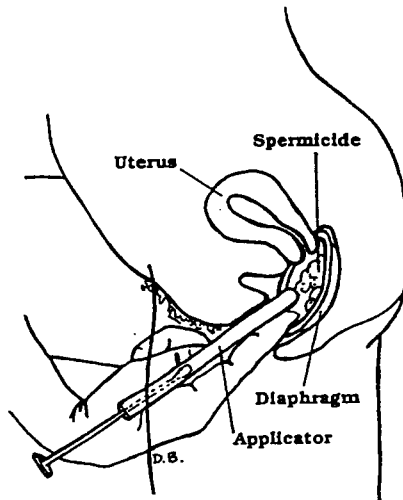
phragm. If your diaphragm is not covering your cervix, it will not work. Take it out and try putting it in again.

The new, easier way to put a diaphragm in:

1. Put the diaphragm in without the spermicide. Check to be sure it covers your cervix. You can put it in this way as long before having intercourse as you want.



2. Before having intercourse, fill an applicator full of spermicide. Pull down the front edge of the diaphragm a little with your finger, to slip the applicator in between the diaphragm and your cervix. Push the plunger on the applicator in. The spermicide will be between the diaphragm and your cervix. You can pull the applicator out, and check with your finger to make sure your cervix is still covered.

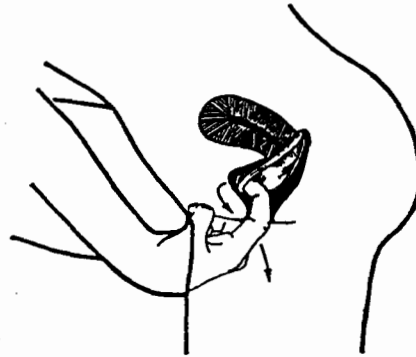


After your diaphragm is in:

1. Leave your diaphragm in for 8 hours after having intercourse. This allows enough time for the spermicide to kill

THE DIAPHRAGM

From: ITS YOUR CHOICE



Taking the diaphragm out

all the sperm.

2. If you want to have intercourse again during the 8 hours your diaphragm is in, leave the diaphragm in. Don't move your diaphragm. Just put an extra applicator of spermicide into the part of your vagina which is not covered by your diaphragm. Be sure to leave the diaphragm in for 8 hours after the last time you have intercourse.

3. Take your diaphragm out by hooking a finger under the front rim and pulling gently.
4. Wash the diaphragm in warm water and pat it dry or leave it out to dry before putting it away. Check for holes in the diaphragm while you are washing it. Hold it up to a light and stretch it gently. The most likely place to find a hole is close to the rim. Diaphragms usually last 2 to 3 years before the rubber breaks down.
5. Keep your diaphragm out of the sunlight, in a cool, dry place.
6. If you have a vaginal infection, you will need to kill any germs left on the diaphragm. Soak your diaphragm for 15 minutes in 70% rubbing alcohol, then rinse your diaphragm well. You can buy this type of alcohol at any drugstore.
7. You may need to get a different size of diaphragm:

THE DIAPHRAGM

From: THE NEW INTERNATIONALIST



- ❖ after you've had a baby
- ❖ after an abortion or a miscarriage when you were more than 3 months pregnant
- ❖ if you've gained or lost more than 15 pounds

Can the diaphragm harm me?

You should not be able to feel the diaphragm when it is in. If you get any cramping or pain with your diaphragm in, you were probably given too big a diaphragm and should go back to your doctor.

Bladder infections

Sometimes women get bladder infections because they were given too big a diaphragm. If this happens to you, go to a doctor or clinic to see if your diaphragm is the right size. If you still get a lot of bladder and urinary tract infections with the right size of diaphragm, you should not use a diaphragm.

Allergy to spermicide:

If you are itchy or your vagina stings with your diaphragm in, you may be allergic to the spermicide. Try a different brand.

Always take your diaphragm out 8 hours after the last time you had intercourse to avoid a vaginal infection.



.....THE DIAPHRAGM.....

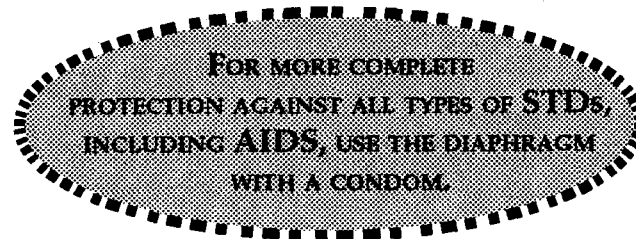
What problems do some women have with the diaphragm?

When your diaphragm is in, you cannot swim or take a bath because the water could wash out the spermicide. It is fine to take a shower.

The spermicide you use with the diaphragm tastes bad.

Does the diaphragm protect against STDs?

The diaphragm gives you some protection against some, but not nearly as much as condoms. **The diaphragm does not protect you against AIDS.**



How can I get a diaphragm?

You will need to go to a doctor or clinic to be fitted with the right size of diaphragm. Some doctors don't know how to fit the diaphragm very well. Make sure your doctor knows how to fit them. Ask her to let you put it in and take it out a couple of times in the office, to be sure you know how to use it. Remember to buy an applicator the first time you buy spermicide, you will need it if you have intercourse again while you have the diaphragm in place.

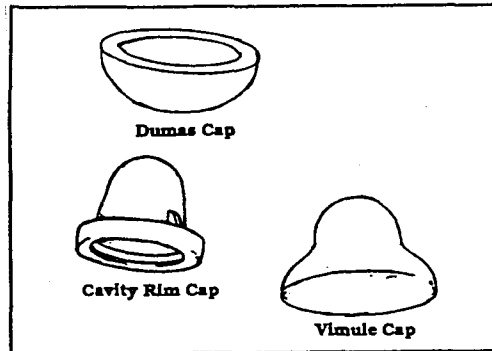
THE CERVICAL CAP

THE CERVICAL CAP

The cervical cap is made of rubber. It fits over your cervix and attaches by suction. You use the cap with a small amount of spermicide.

The cap can be put in up to 8 hours ahead of time if you don't want to interrupt lovemaking. It must be in at least one half hour before intercourse. You can swim or have a bath with the cap in.

Caps come in different sizes because women's cervixes come in different shapes and sizes. You are most likely to get a Cavity Rim cap. The Dumas Cap fits some women who cannot use a Cavity Rim Cap. The



HOW WELL DOES IT WORK?

IF 100 WOMEN USE THE CAP FOR A YEAR, 2 TO 3 WILL GET PREGNANT. THE CAP ONLY WORKS WELL IF YOU USE IT EVERY TIME YOU HAVE INTERCOURSE. YOU NEED TO USE SPERMICIDE WITH THE CAP FOR IT TO WORK.

Vimule Cap is not a good design and should not be used.

Only a few doctors and nurses know how to fit cervical caps. To find out where you can get a cervical cap, phone the closest Planned Parenthood, women's centre, or public health unit.

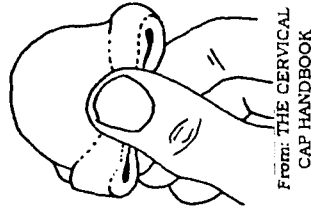
How is the the cap used?

1) Fill the cap about a third full of spermicide jelly. Don't put any spermicide on the inside rim of the cap. It might keep the cap from

THE CERVICAL CAP

suctioning on to your cervix.

- 2) It is easiest to put your cap in if you are squatting, standing with one foot on a chair, or lying down. First, put your finger into your vagina to feel for your cervix. You will know when you've touched your cervix because it will feel like the tip of your nose. Then, hold the sides of your cap together with one hand and hold open the lips of your vagina with your other hand. Push your cap in towards your cervix. Feel with your finger to be sure your cap is covering your cervix by feeling for your cervix around your cap. If you can still feel your cervix, your cap is in

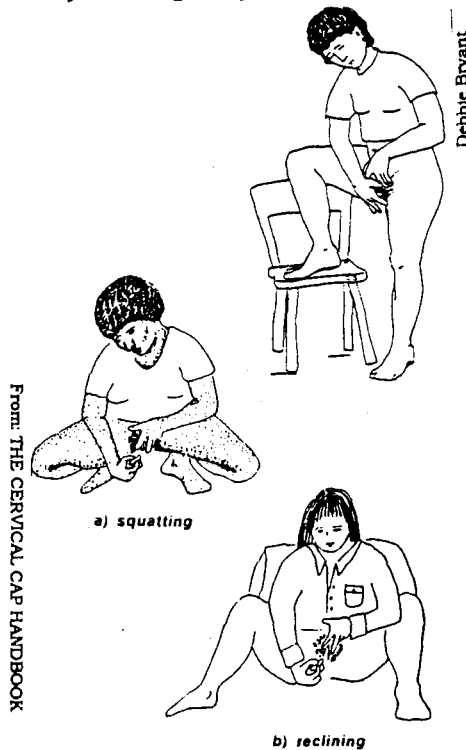


From: THE CERVICAL CAP HANDBOOK

wrong. Just take it out and try again.

- 3) After intercourse, check to see if your cap is still over your cervix. If the cap is not on your cervix, it was knocked off during intercourse. Push it back on so it covers your cervix. Then, put an applicator full of spermicide into your vagina right away. This is most likely to happen if you were given the wrong size cap. Do not keep using your cap for birth control without having the size checked.

- 4) You need to leave your



From: THE CERVICAL CAP HANDBOOK

a) squatting

b) reclining

THE CERVICAL CAP.....

cap in for 8 hours after intercourse to be sure that all the sperm are dead. You can have intercourse again while your cap is in without adding more spermicide. Just leave the cap in for 8 hours after the last time you have intercourse.

- 5) Don't leave your cap in for longer than 24 hours.
- 6) After you take your cap out, wash it with warm water. Turn the Cavity Rim cap inside out, and scrub out the inside of the rim with a clean toothbrush. Hold the cap up to a light and look at it carefully to be sure it has no holes in it. Pat the cap dry, or leave it out to dry. Then put it away in a cool dry place out of the sun. A cap usually lasts 2 to 3 years before the rubber begins to wear out.
 - ❖ If you have left your cap in a few days and it smells bad, soak it in a bowl of warm water with a couple of tablespoons of white vinegar.
 - ❖ If you have a vaginal infection and have used your cap, you need to make sure no germs are left on the cap. Soak the cap for 15 minutes in 70% rubbing alcohol, then rinse it well. You can buy rubbing alcohol at any drugstore.
- 7) Don't use the cervical cap during your period. The blood flowing out of your cervix keeps the cap from staying in place. You need to use another birth control method if you have intercourse during your period. Condoms & foam, or a diaphragm are all good methods to use.
- 8) Use condoms with the cap the first 6 to 8 times you use it. If you have more than one sexual partner, try the cap with each partner. Use each position for intercourse you normally use and then check to be sure the cap is still on your cervix.

THE CERVICAL CAP

Can the cap harm me?

No, there are no harmful side effects. You should not get any cramping or pain with the cap in unless you have the wrong size cap, or an infection in your cervix.

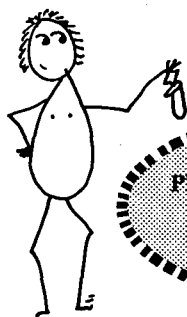
If you have an infection in your cervix, don't use the cap until it has cleared up. If your Pap smear shows a problem on your cervix, wait until the Pap test goes back to normal before using a cap.

After surgery on your cervix and after childbirth, wait 6 weeks before using a cap.

Don't use the Vimule cap, it has a sharp rubber edge.

Does the cap protect me against STDs?

The cap gives you some protection against STDs but does not protect against STDs as well as condoms. **You cannot depend on the cap to protect you against AIDS.**



FOR MORE COMPLETE
PROTECTION AGAINST ALL TYPES OF STDs,
INCLUDING AIDS, USE THE CAP WITH A
CONDOM.

THE CONTRACEPTIVE SPONGE

THE CONTRACEPTIVE SPONGE

The contraceptive sponge is a small, round dry sponge which is filled with spermicide. One size fits everyone.

How does it work?

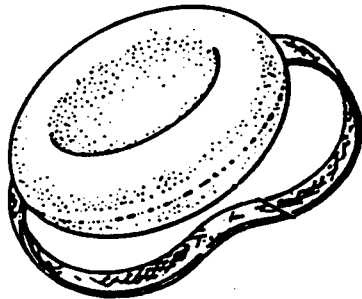
You wet the sponge with a little water and insert it into your vagina before having intercourse. You can leave it in for up to 24 hours. Don't use the sponge during your period.

Some women like using the sponge for birth control because they don't need to go to a doctor or clinic to get it.

HOW WELL DOES IT WORK?

THE SPONGE DOESN'T WORK AS WELL AS OTHER BARRIER METHODS. IF 100 WOMEN USE IT FOR A YEAR, ABOUT 10 TO 15 WILL GET PREGNANT.

FROM CONTRACEPTIVE TECHNOLOGY



Does the Sponge protect me from STDs?

No, the sponge will not protect you from AIDS or other STDs.

FOR PROTECTION AGAINST
STDs INCLUDING AIDS, ALWAYS
USE THE SPONGE WITH
A CONDOM.

HORMONAL METHODS

HORMONAL METHODS

These are methods that change your whole body. They are made from manufactured hormones. These hormones stop you from getting pregnant by changing your menstrual cycle.

THE BIRTH CONTROL PILL

The pill can cause many side effects because it affects your whole body. Some are annoying, others are dangerous. Because of these side effects, we don't think the pill is as good a method of birth control as methods which affect less of your body.

How does the pill work?

The manufactured hormones in the pill go into your blood and act a lot like the estrogen and progesterone your body makes. If there are a lot of these hormones in your blood, your ovaries stop making their own estrogen and progesterone. Your body doesn't go through a regular menstrual cycle. You don't ovulate, and your ovaries don't send an egg out to be fertilized. If there is no egg, you can't get pregnant.

When you are on the pill, you always get your period once every 28 days. The pill tells your body when your period should come.

Different types of birth control pills have different amounts of the hormones estrogen and progesterone in them, because our bodies each react differently to hormones.

THE PILL

How is the pill used?

Pills come in packs of 21 or 28. You swallow one pill each day if you have a packet of 28. If you have a packet of 21, you swallow one pill each day for 21 days and then do not take a pill for 7 days. The pill works best if you take it at the same time each day. Use condoms or another method of birth control during your first pack of pills.

Will the pill harm me?

The pill is safer now than when it was first made. It is still not safe for some women.

Serious side effects:

The pill makes you more likely to have a stroke, a heart attack, blood clots, and high blood pressure. If you have a lot of cholesterol (a type of fat) in your blood, you will be more likely to have these problems. Your doctor should check your blood pressure and do a blood test for cholesterol before giving you the pill.

Call your doctor right away if you are on the pill and feel any of these things:

- ❖ strong pain in your lower belly (abdomen)
- ❖ strong chest pain, coughing, problems breathing
- ❖ strong headache, dizziness, weakness, numbness
- ❖ problems seeing, blurry vision

HOW WELL DOES THE PILL WORK?

THE PILL WORKS VERY WELL. ONE WOMAN OUT OF EVERY 200 WOMEN TAKING THE PILL WILL GET PREGNANT WITHIN A YEAR. THIS IS TRUE IF ALL OF THE WOMEN REMEMBER TO TAKE THEIR PILLS EVERY DAY.

THE PILL

- ❖ problems speaking
- ❖ strong leg pain

First try your pills for 3 months. Sometimes the problems go away once your body gets used to the pill. If they don't, talk to your doctor or health nurse about trying a different pill.

You have the right to know what could go wrong on the pill. Knowing will help you understand changes that are going on in your body. You're the one using the pills, not your doctor!

Common problems women get from taking the pill:

- ❖ feeling sick to your stomach
- ❖ tender breasts
- ❖ tiredness
- ❖ vaginal infections
- ❖ acne or darkened skin on your face
- ❖ bleeding between periods
- ❖ gaining more than 10 pounds
- ❖ less interest in sex
- ❖ depression, anxiety, or moodiness
- ❖ migraine headaches
- ❖ high blood pressure



THE PILL

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Vitamins and the pill:

The pill changes the way your body uses some vitamins. When you are on the pill you need more of vitamins B6, C and folic acid, a B vitamin. You also need these vitamins when you first stop taking the pill, if you've been on the pill more than a few months. You may want to take vitamin pills. You can also get these vitamins from food:

B6: found in meat, especially liver, bananas, whole grain cereals, and vegetables.

C: found in oranges, grapefruit, strawberries, tomatoes, broccoli, brussel sprouts, kale and liver.

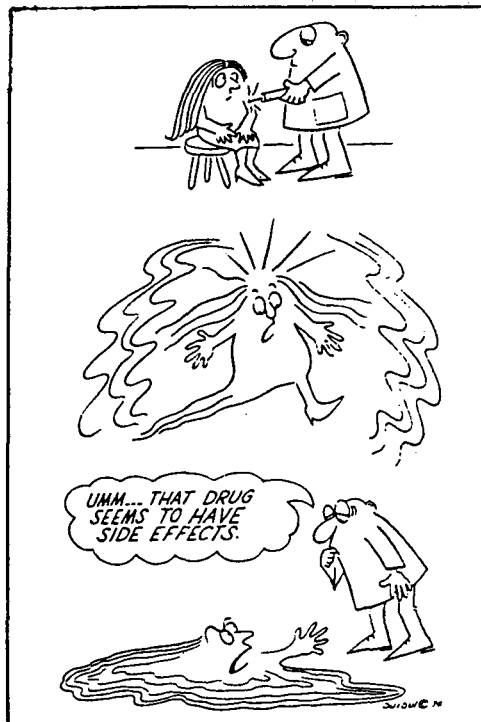
Folic Acid: found in liver and other organ meats, green leafy vegetables, beets, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, kale, brewer's yeast, and sunflower seeds.

The pill and cancer

Ever since the pill has been on the market, people have been worried about whether or not it causes cancer.

Breast cancer

No one knows for sure if the pill makes you more likely to get breast cancer. Some studies



Cartoons by Bolbol

THE PILL

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have shown that it might, especially if you start taking the pill when you're very young and take it for many years.

Breast cancer is a very common kind of cancer. If anybody in your family has had breast cancer, you are more likely to get it than other women. Taking the pill might make you more likely to get breast cancer. The pill may also help breast cancer to grow faster if a woman has it and doesn't know it yet.

Cancer of the ovaries

The pill can help protect you from getting cancer of the ovaries. This is a rare kind of cancer.

Cervical cancer

The test your doctor does during a vaginal exam to check for cervical cancer is called a Pap test. When you are on the pill, your Pap test may not be normal.

The pill can cause changes on your cervix which are not cancer. It can make the outside of your cervix look different. The abnormal test could mean you have an infection, and very rarely means you have cancer. Researchers are still not sure if the pill makes you more likely to get cervical cancer or not.

If your Pap test shows a problem, make sure you have been tested for all infections, including chlamydia. If you have an infection, wait for 3 months after treatment to get another Pap test. This allows time for your cervix to heal.

If you don't have an infection, or your Pap test still is not normal after treating an infection, the pill may be causing the changes on your cervix. Use another method of birth control, like condoms and foam, for 3 months. Then have another Pap test to see if the problem is still there. Every woman should have a

THE PILL

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Pap test once a year. This is very important when you're on the pill.

Try to get your prescriptions (pills) from the same drug store pharmacy. They can tell you what other medicine is okay to take when you are on the pill.

What do women like about the pill?

- ❖ you have lighter, shorter periods.
- ❖ premenstrual tension can decrease
- ❖ you are less likely to have an iron deficiency
- ❖ you are less likely to get pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)
- ❖ you don't have to stop during sex to think about birth control.
- ❖ You don't have to talk about it with your partner.
- ❖ It's easy - you just have to remember to take a pill each day.
- ❖ The pill works well to keep you from getting pregnant.

Will I be able to get pregnant later on?

Most women can get pregnant right away after stopping the pill. Sometimes it may take a while for your own hormones to come back into balance after taking the pill. It's a good idea to use another method of birth control for 3 months before trying to get pregnant.

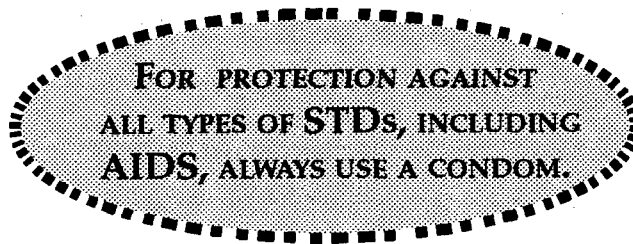
If you think you may be pregnant while taking the pill, stop taking it right away. Use another method, like condoms, until you know for sure. The chemicals in the pill could harm the fetus.

THE PILL

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Does the pill protect against STDs?

No, the pill does not protect you from AIDS or other STDs. While you are on the pill, it's easier for you to get chlamydia. You can get chlamydia without knowing it, because you don't always get itchiness or pain from the infection. Get your doctor to test you for chlamydia at least once a year when you're on the pill.



Is this method for me?

You shouldn't take the pill if you are over 35, if you smoke or if you are breast feeding. If you aren't breast feeding, wait at least 2 weeks after having your baby before starting on the pill.

You may feel pressured to have sex when you don't want to when you are on the pill. Your partner may think you are always ready because you can't get pregnant. *IT IS ALWAYS OKAY TO SAY NO TO SEX.*

Don't take the pill if you have these health problems:

- ❖ hepatitis or liver disease
- ❖ poor blood circulation
- ❖ breast cancer or cancer of your reproductive organs
- ❖ abnormal bleeding from your vagina
- ❖ your mother took DES when she was pregnant with you.

Ask your mother if she was given any hormone shots or pills when she was pregnant.

THE PILL

- ❖ migraine headaches or other severe headaches
- ❖ high blood pressure
- ❖ diabetes or someone in your family has diabetes
- ❖ gallbladder problems
- ❖ mononucleosis (Mono)
- ❖ serious varicose veins
- ❖ major surgery that immobilises you
- ❖ major injury to your lower leg (or leg cast)
- ❖ smoking

If you have one of these health problems, you probably shouldn't take the pill:

- ❖ periods that aren't regular
- ❖ asthma
- ❖ epilepsy
- ❖ acne
- ❖ women who are breastfeeding (*not a health problem!*)
- ❖ family history of death from heart attack before age 50
- ❖ heart or kidney disease
- ❖ depression
- ❖ you had hepatitis in the last year

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THE MORNING AFTER PILL
.....
MORNING AFTER PILLS

If you have had intercourse without any birth control or if you know your birth control method didn't work, the morning after pill can stop you from getting pregnant. Morning after pills should only be used for emergencies.

Don't take DES as a morning after pill, it is not safe. Ask for Ovral instead.

How does the Morning After Pill work?

The morning after pill is a strong dose of the birth control pill that you have to get from a doctor, clinic, or hospital emergency room. You can't just take more of your birth control pills. The hormones in the morning after pill change the lining of your uterus (womb) so that the fertilized egg can't attach itself. This stops you from getting pregnant even if your egg joined with your partner's sperm.

How is it used?

You should try to take the morning after pill as soon after having unprotected sex as possible (up to 72 hours after). Your doctor or clinic will give you 4 pills for one emergency. Take 2 of the pills right away. Take the other 2 pills 12 hours later.

Your next period may come at any time. It should come within 3 weeks.

Can the morning after pill harm me?

If you have any health problems

HOW WELL DOES IT WORK? OUT OF 100 WOMEN WHO TAKE THE MORNING AFTER PILL, 1 OR 2 STAY PREGNANT.

THE MORNING AFTER PILL

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which make the pill unsafe for you, the morning after pill will also be unsafe. Doctors and researchers warn against using it often, because they are worried that it may be unsafe.

Serious side effects

see your doctor right away if you have:

- ❖ strong pain in your lower belly (abdomen)
- ❖ strong chest pain, coughing, problems breathing
- ❖ strong headache, dizziness, weakness, numbness
- ❖ problems seeing, blurry vision, problems speaking
- ❖ strong leg pain

THESE ARE SIGNS THAT YOU MAY HAVE A BLOOD CLOT, A STROKE, VERY HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, OR A HEART ATTACK.

If the morning after pill doesn't work, it is strongly recommended that you have an abortion. The hormones in the morning after pill may harm your fetus.

What problems do women have with the morning after pill?

You may feel sick. If you throw up, you might have to take more pills. Talk to the doctor about giving you another drug so this won't happen.

Will I be able to get pregnant again?

Yes, although it may take a few months for your menstrual cycle to go back to normal. The hormones in the morning after pill can throw your own hormones out of balance for a short time.

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NORPLANT

Norplant is a new hormonal contraceptive made of six flexible rubber tubes the size of match sticks. Each stick has progestin (a manufactured hormone) which is released over time. The tubes are put under the skin of a woman's upper arm and will leave bumps. The tubes last about five years and then must be taken out. After that, you need new ones put in or you need to use another kind of birth control. It is very important that the tubes be removed after five years.

How does Norplant work?

Norplant works somewhat like the pill. The hormone progestin stops ovulation from happening. Your ovaries don't send an egg out to be fertilized. Without an egg, you can't get pregnant.

How is Norplant inserted?

Norplant must be inserted and removed by a trained practitioner. Ask your doctor if she has experience in putting in Norplants. If she doesn't, ask to be referred to someone who does. Norplant should be inserted in the first 7 days of your period. A small cut in your upper arm is made after you are given a local anaesthesia (freezes just the area being worked on). The tubes are then put in one at a time. They will look like a fan. Your skin will bruise and swell, but this should go away. See your doctor if the swelling does not go away after 3 or 4 days or if you still have pain.

HOW WELL DOES IT WORK? NORPLANT WORKS VERY WELL. OUT OF 1000 WOMEN WHO USE NORPLANT FOR 1 YEAR, 2 OF THEM WILL GET PREGNANT.

NORPLANT

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Will Norplant harm me?

Because it is a new kind of birth control, the actual long term safety of Norplant won't be known for some time. Norplant can be removed any time if there is a trained practitioner where you live. If there are no trained practitioners, you should reconsider using Norplant.

Go to the doctor right away if you get pregnant when you have Norplants. You could have an ectopic pregnancy which is very dangerous.

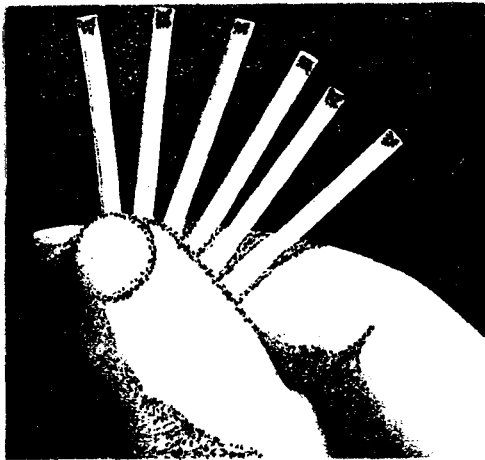
A woman who has a normal pregnancy while on Norplant, should have the Norplant insertions removed.

Do not use Norplant if you have:

- ❖ blood clotting problems
- ❖ heart disease or stroke (or are at high risk)
- ❖ liver problems
- ❖ breast cancer (or are at high risk)
- ❖ abnormal vaginal bleeding
- ❖ if you are a smoker

If you have any of the following and choose Norplant, see your health practitioner regularly:

The Population Council



diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, migraine headaches, epilepsy, abnormal mammogram, fibrocystic breasts, depression, heart disease, gallbladder disease or

NORPLANT

.....
kidney disease.

Side Effects

Many women using Norplant experience irregular periods. Sometimes they bleed more, sometimes their periods stop. If these problems don't go away in a year, you might need to find a different method of birth control.

Any birth control method like Norplant that has manufactured hormones in it will often cause headaches, acne, breast tenderness, weight gain, and mood changes. You have to decide if these are negative effects that you can live with.

Norplant also makes the chances of having cysts on your ovaries greater. They usually aren't cancer, but can be painful.

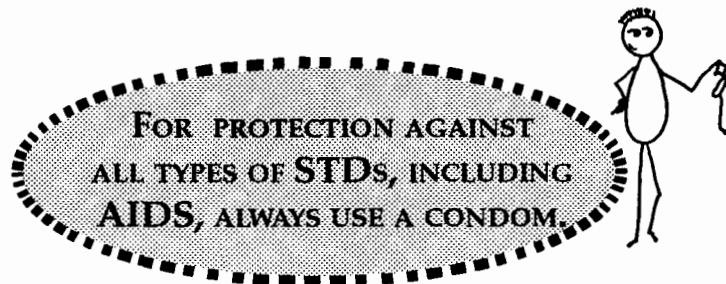
Serious Side Effects

See your doctor if while on Norplant you have:

- ❖ strong lower abdominal pain (possible ectopic pregnancy)
- ❖ heavy vaginal bleeding
- ❖ pain, pus, or bleeding where the Norplants were put in
- ❖ if part of a Norplant comes out
- ❖ jaundice
- ❖ migraine headaches or blurred vision
- ❖ your period does not come when you think it should

Does Norplant protect against STDs?

No.



DEPO PROVERA

DEPO PROVERA

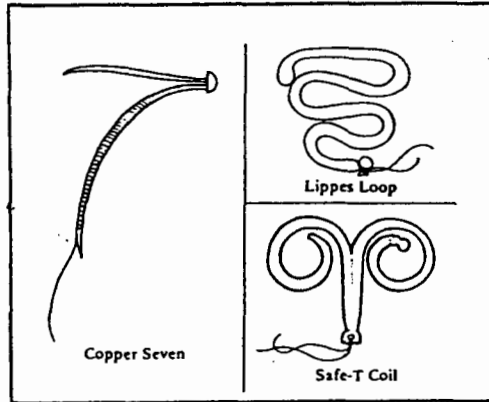
Depo Provera is not a legal method of birth control in either Canada or the U.S. because it is not safe. Your doctor can give it to you anyway because it is on the market for other reasons. Depo Provera is a shot that keeps you from getting pregnant for 3 months. It has bad side effects and might make you more likely to get cancer. Once you have the shot, you can't stop the side effects. Doctors who give women Depo Provera for birth control don't always tell them that this drug hasn't been approved for birth control.



B.C. Medical Association

THE IUD

From: NEW WOMEN'S HEALTH HANDBOOK



THE IUD

An IUD is fitted inside your uterus by a doctor. It is made of plastic and has a string attached to it that hangs down from your uterus through your cervix and into your vagina.

Some IUD's have copper wire wound

around that breaks down slowly when the IUD is in your body. These IUD's are called Copper 7's, Copper T's, Shanghai V's or Multi-Loads.

The Progestasert IUD has a coating of the hormone progesterone on the outside that dissolves slowly in your body. Small amounts of progesterone go into your uterus to help keep you from getting pregnant.

The IUD is more likely to make you infertile than other methods of birth control.

How does the IUD work?

The IUD keeps the fertilized egg from attaching to your uterus. Progesterone IUD's also help to keep the egg and sperm from meeting. The copper in some IUD's may help to kill sperm.

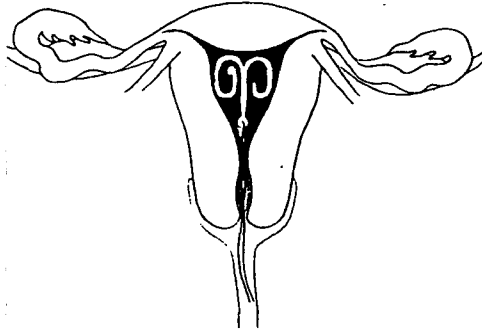
HOW WELL DOES IT WORK?

THE IUD WORKS WELL. IF 100 WOMEN USE AN IUD FOR A YEAR, 2 TO 5 OF THEM WILL GET PREGNANT.

THE IUD

How is the IUD used?

FROM: A NEW VIEW OF A WOMAN'S BODY



To get an IUD, you need to see the doctor two times. The first time, the doctor will make sure you have no infections and test to be sure you are not pregnant. The second time, the doctor will put the IUD in your uterus. It may hurt when the IUD is put in, try to relax and

breathe deeply. Ask your doctor if she can freeze your cervix with a local anaesthetic so that it will not hurt. It is easiest for your doctor to put in an IUD during your period.

You may have bad cramps after your IUD is put in. Have someone come with you to the clinic or doctor's office, so they can take you home afterwards.

For the first 3 months you have an IUD, use condoms, foam, or a diaphragm. Most IUD failures happen in the first 3 months.

You will need to check the IUD string in your vagina at least once a month. Your IUD could fall out without you knowing it. Put one or 2 fingers into your vagina to make sure it's still there, but don't pull on the string. It should not be hard to find the string. You should not be able to feel any of the hard plastic of the IUD itself.

Most IUD's can be left in for 2 to 3 years. Check with your doctor or nurse to find out when you need to come back to change your IUD.

.....THE IUD.....

Can the IUD harm me?

Yes it can. With an IUD in, you are more likely to get an infection of your uterus and tubes. This type of infection is called PID (pelvic inflammatory disease). The infections which cause PID can travel up the IUD string from your vagina into your uterus. You can become infertile from PID.

Perforation:

It is rare for an IUD to go through the wall of your uterus into your abdomen. This is called "uterine perforation". You may feel pain but it can happen without you feeling it. As long as you can feel your IUD string in your vagina, you will know that the IUD is still where it is supposed to be.

Menstrual problems:

You may find that your periods are longer and heavier, and that you have more cramps with an IUD in. If your periods are heavy, you may end up with anemia (too little iron in your blood). Make sure you eat foods with lots of iron in them, such as liver, kidneys, heart, beans, molasses, green leafy vegetables, and whole grains. Eat them with foods rich in vitamin C, like oranges. Tell your doctor if you feel really tired, you may need to take iron pills.

The Progestasert IUD puts out small amounts of a hormone which can cause lighter periods. Your menstrual cycle could change and you may get other side effects.

You can have the IUD taken out when you want. Your doctor does not have the right to refuse, no matter what your reason is.

THE IUD

Do not use the IUD if you:

- ❖ do not have a clinic or doctor nearby
- ❖ plan to get pregnant later
- ❖ have multiple sexual partners
- ❖ have Pap smears that are not normal
- ❖ have bleeding disorders
- ❖ have irregular or abnormal bleeding
- ❖ have had an ectopic pregnancy
- ❖ your mother took DES when she was pregnant with you

See your doctor right away if you have:

- ❖ pain in your abdomen (lower belly)
- ❖ a smelly discharge from your vagina, or more discharge than usual.
- ❖ bleeding that isn't your period
- ❖ fever and chills.

Pregnancy:

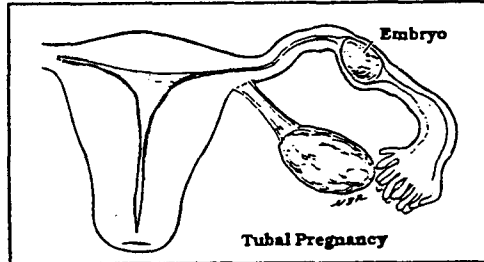
If you have an IUD in and think you may be pregnant, go to your doctor or nurse right away and have the IUD taken out. You may miscarry when it is taken out, but it is dangerous to leave the IUD in.

If you are pregnant with an IUD in, and you feel like you have the flu or an infection, go to a hospital emergency room or a clinic right away. Women have died from infections when they were pregnant with IUD's in.

THE IUD

.....

If you think you could be pregnant, and you have spotting, cramping or sharp pains, go to a doctor or a clinic right away. You could have an ectopic pregnancy (instead of growing in your uterus, the embryo grows in your tube. If you don't live near a hospital or clinic, you should to reconsider using an IUD.



From: MY BODY, MY HEALTH

What do women like about the IUD?

- ❖ You never have to think about birth control, except to check your string once a month.
- ❖ If you can't use any other birth control, you may be able to use an IUD.

Will I be able to get pregnant later?

If you want to be sure to be able to have children later on, don't use an IUD.

Does the IUD protect against STDs?

No. If you get gonorrhea or chlamydia while you have an IUD in, you will be more likely to get PID than if you didn't have an IUD.



FOR MORE COMPLETE
PROTECTION AGAINST ALL STDs,
INCLUDING AIDS, ALWAYS
USE A CONDOM.

FERTILITY AWARENESS

NATURAL METHODS

A "natural" method of birth control keeps you from getting pregnant without changing your body. You use no gadgets or chemicals to keep from getting pregnant.

FERTILITY AWARENESS

This method is complicated. Try to find someone who has used it successfully to help you with it.

With this method, you learn to use your mucus and temperature changes to know when you are fertile. These changes happen because you have different amounts of hormones in your blood at different times.

What is Mucus?

You may have noticed that sometimes you have a lot of discharge from your vagina, and at other times you have less. This healthy discharge is mostly made of mucus made by glands inside your cervix.

How do you check for mucus changes?

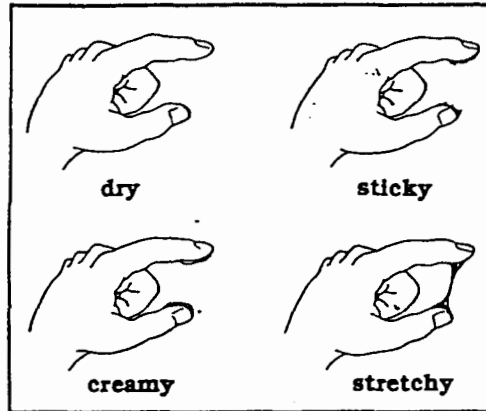
Check your mucus by getting some mucus on your finger from the opening of your vagina. Look for changes in what your mucus feels like. Is it wet or dry, sticky or slippery? Its colour is less important.

HOW WELL DOES IT WORK?

OUT OF EVERY 100 WOMEN WHO USE THE METHOD WELL FOR A YEAR, TWO WILL GET PREGNANT, IF THE WOMEN ALWAYS FOLLOW THE METHOD'S RULES. IN MOST GROUPS OF WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN STUDIED USING THIS METHOD, ABOUT 15 TO 20 OUT OF 100 GET PREGNANT FROM USING THE METHOD POORLY (GUESSING INSTEAD OF CHARTING).

FERTILITY AWARENESS

Often after your period, you won't have a lot of mucus. A week after your period, you may have more and it will probably go from sticky (like rubber cement) to stretchy (more like raw egg whites) in the next week or so. As soon as it is at all stretchy or slippery, it can be fertile mucus.



This means you should use birth control if you are having sex.. Check it at least 2 times a day and write a word or two to describe it.

Use the sample chart to help you describe your mucus. If you have had 3 days of dry mucus after your fertile (slippery or stretchy) mucus, then on the evening of the third day, you should be safe to have sex..

This method can be very confusing at first. There are a lot of mistakes you can make. We believe that it's best to take a class on this method before you try to use it as birth control. You can also read a book about it, but you need to check what you're doing with someone who knows how to use the method.

How do you check for temperature changes?

Your temperature goes up after ovulation, when your ovary puts out a lot of the hormone progesterone. Buy a "Basal Body Thermometer" from a drugstore. It is a special thermometer that can show small changes better than a regular fever thermometer.

FERTILITY AWARENESS

How to take your temperature

1. Shake the thermometer down the thermometer the night before. Leave it next to your bed.
2. Take your temperature in the morning before getting out of bed or doing anything. It's best to take your temperature about the same time each morning. You can take your temperature by mouth (orally) or in your vagina (vaginally), but always take it the same way.
3. Mark your temperature on a chart each day with a dot.
4. After you ovulate, your temperature will be at least .2 C higher than before.
5. After your temperature has stayed at least .2 C higher for three days, you can be sure that you have ovulated.
6. You are not fertile from the evening of the fourth day of higher temperatures until when your next period begins.

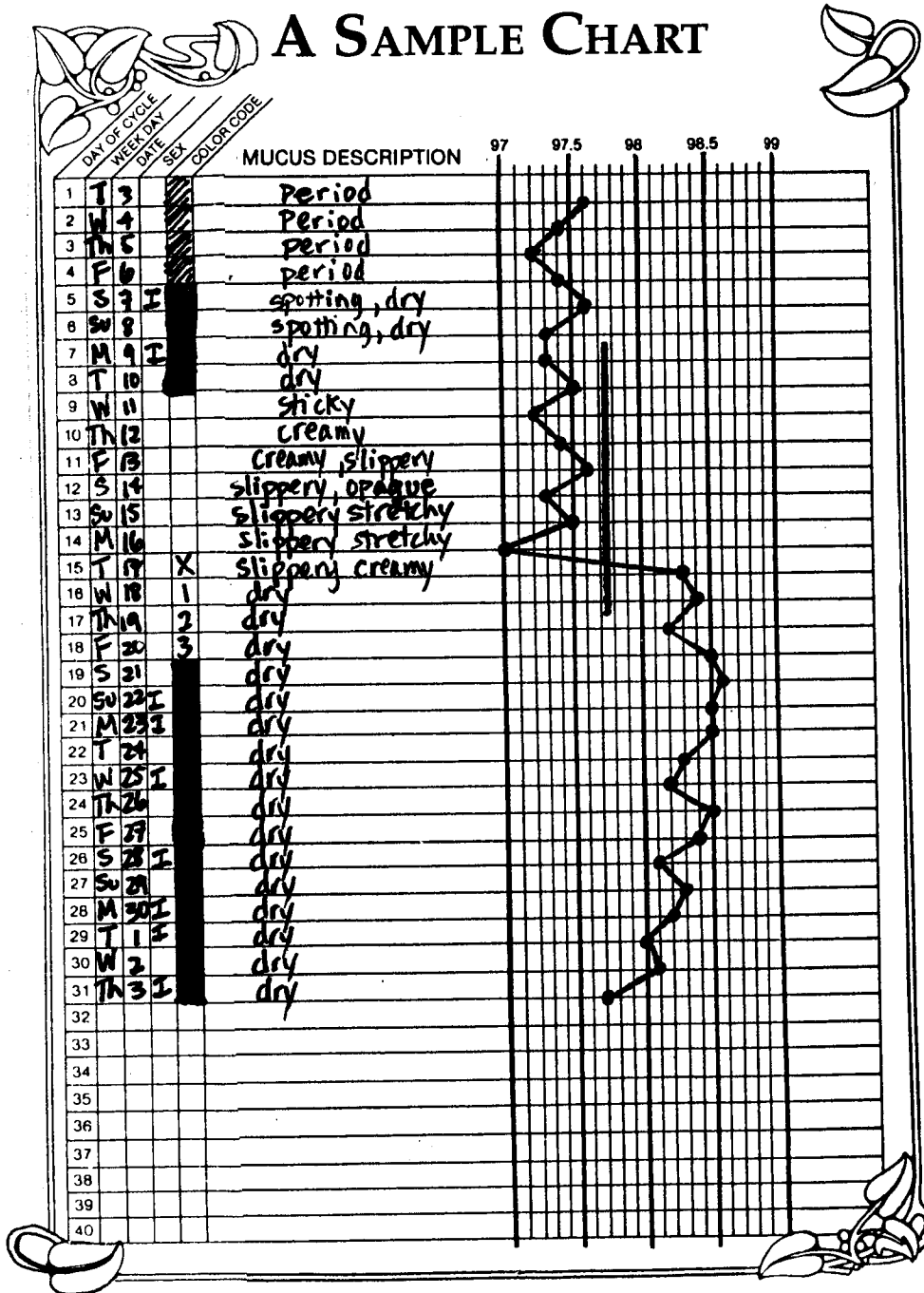
A sample chart

On the next page, there is a sample chart of a woman's mucus and temperature changes during one month. The first day on her chart is the first day of her period, and her chart goes until the first day of her next period. She has written down what each day's mucus was like. She has put a dot by her temperature each morning and joined the dots with a line. She has also shown when she had intercourse by writing "I" in the "sex" column.

Everyone's chart is different. Only by learning about your changes and keeping track of them will you know when you are fertile.

FERTILITY AWARENESS

A SAMPLE CHART



FERTILITY AWARENESS

What do you do during your fertile time?

You will probably find that you are fertile for a third to a half of your cycle. You must use birth control during your fertile time if you don't want to get pregnant.

What problems are there with using the fertility awareness method?

Problems with mucus charting:

- ❖ It may be hard to remember to check your mucus each day.
- ❖ If you often have vaginal infections, it will be hard to tell what your mucus is like.
- ❖ Douching will wash away your mucus. If you douche often, you will not be able to chart your mucus changes. You do not need to douche unless you are treating a vaginal infection.
- ❖ Antihistamines and allergy shots will dry up your mucus.
- ❖ Antidepressants, tranquilizers and other drugs for anxiety and depression may change your whole hormonal cycle.
- ❖ You cannot use this method if you take a lot of drugs or alcohol.

Problems with temperature charting:

- ❖ Your temperature can go up if you are sick, if you stayed up very late the night before, or if you slept in.
- ❖ If you have a baby or young children, it can be hard to take your temperature before getting up. If you have been up in the night a lot with a baby, your temperature will be higher than usual.

Where can I learn fertility awareness?

There is a list of names and addresses of groups which teach this method on page 80.

IT IS REALLY IMPORTANT TO TAKE A CLASS AND TALK ABOUT THIS METHOD WITH ANOTHER WOMAN EXPERIENCED IN USING THIS METHOD.

.....THE OVULATION METHOD.....

THE OVULATION METHOD

This method only uses your mucus changes to tell when you are fertile Page 52 tells you about mucus changes.

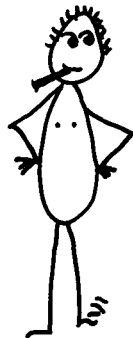
The ovulation method works as well as the fertility awareness method for many women. If you have irregular menstrual cycles or if you can't always check your mucus because of vaginal infections or other reasons, you should also take your temperature.

THE BASAL BODY TEMPERATURE METHOD

This method depends just on temperature changes to tell you when you are fertile (see page 53).

Your temperature changes will tell you when you have ovulated. Your safe days will only be the days after ovulation and before your period. You will have more safe days if you take your temperature and check your mucus each day. Use birth control when you are fertile if you don't want to get pregnant.

This method works very well if you only depend on your temperature changes for safe time *after* you ovulate.



THE RHYTHM METHOD

THE RHYTHM METHOD (CAUTION!!!)

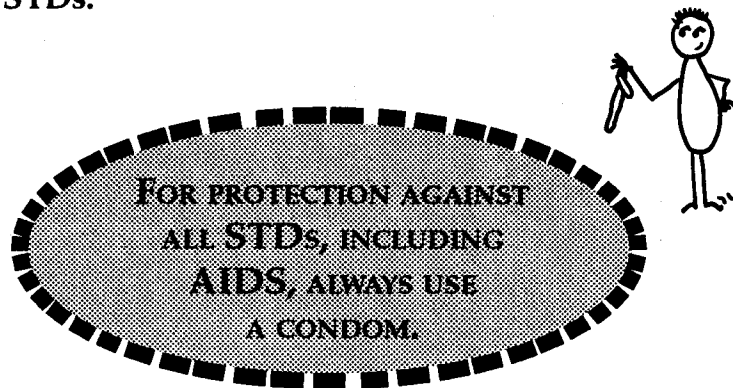
The rhythm method calculates your fertile and infertile times by how long your menstrual cycle is. It assumes you will ovulate exactly in the middle of it.

Even if you are so regular that you can guess the day and the hour that your next period will begin, you can never be sure what will happen next month. Your menstrual cycle can be different if you are under a lot of stress, traveling, or sick.

Sperm can live for 5 to 7 days in a woman's cervix if she has fertile mucus. She could make love on Monday and get pregnant on Saturday. You can't depend on the rhythm method even if your menstrual cycles are regular, because sperm could survive from your "safe" time until when you ovulate. **This method gives no protection from AIDS and other STDs.**

HOW WELL
DOES IT
WORK?

THE RHYTHM
DOES NOT
WORK WELL. IF
100 WOMEN
USE THE
RHYTHM
METHOD FOR A
YEAR, ABOUT
15 WILL GET
PREGNANT.



WITHDRAWAL

WITHDRAWAL (BEWARE!!!)

During intercourse, the man withdraws his penis from the woman's vagina just before he ejaculates and ejaculates away from her to avoid getting sperm into her vagina.

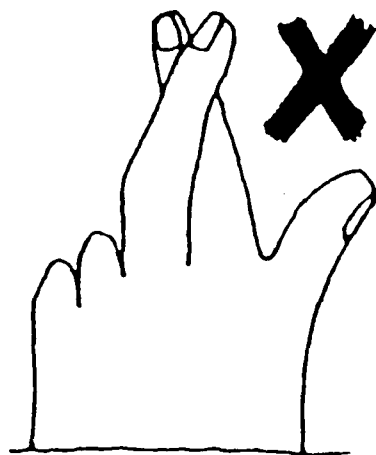
Men do not always have the control to withdraw at the right time. The first few drops of semen which come out have a lot of sperm in them. So, even if your partner withdraws "almost in time", you could get pregnant.

Withdrawal also does not work well because men can "leak" some sperm long before they ejaculate. A bit of fluid that has sperm in it comes out of a man's penis before orgasm.

You can also get pregnant from sperm which is right at the opening of your vagina.

Withdrawal doesn't work well, but it is better than nothing.

HOW WELL DOES IT WORK?
WITHDRAWAL DOES NOT WORK WELL. IF 100 COUPLES USE WITHDRAWAL FOR A YEAR, ABOUT 16 WILL GET PREGNANT.

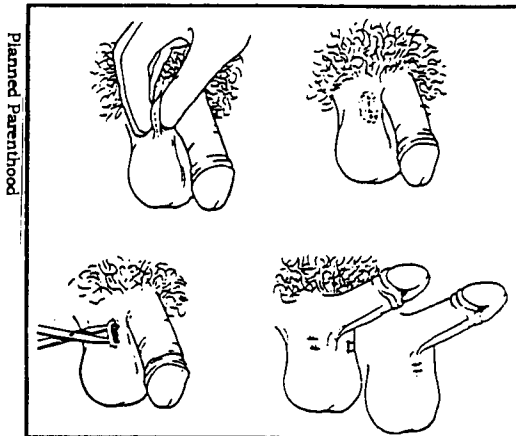


From: CONTRACEPTIVE HANDBOOK

VASECTOMY

STERILIZATION

Sterilization stops you from ever being able to have children again. The operation for a woman is called a tubal ligation. The operation for a man is called a vasectomy.



STEPS IN A VASECTOMY

VASECTOMY

A vasectomy is an operation which makes a man sterile. It is done in a doctor's office. It takes about 20 minutes. The tubes which carry the sperm to his penis are cut so the sperm can't travel through the tubes. Semen still comes out of a man's penis, but there are no sperm in it, so you can't get pregnant.

How is a vasectomy done?

The doctor gives the man a shot of local anaesthetic in his testicles so he can't feel the operation. This is like the freezing a dentist uses. The doctor makes a small cut on each side of the scrotum, the sack of skin which holds the testicles. The two tubes, called the vas deferens, which lead from the testicles to the penis are tied, clipped, or burned shut. Then the cut is stitched closed.

The doctor will test the semen for sperm 3 weeks after the operation. You are not

HOW WELL DOES IT WORK?

A VASECTOMY
IS ALMOST
100% EFFECTIVE
ONCE THE DOC-
TOR HAS TAKEN
2 TESTS THAT
SHOW THE OP-
ERATION
WORKED.

VASECTOMY

safe from getting pregnant until the doctor tells you there is no sperm. Use another kind of birth control until then.

Can a vasectomy hurt my partner?

A vasectomy is a safe and simple operation. It is much simpler and safer than a tubal ligation for a woman.

Vasectomy doesn't change what sex is like for a man or for the woman he's with. His penis still gets hard and he still has orgasms. Semen still comes out during orgasm.

A man should talk to his doctor if he has fever, bleeding or a lot of pain or swelling that doesn't go away in a few days after his vasectomy.

What do people like about vasectomy?

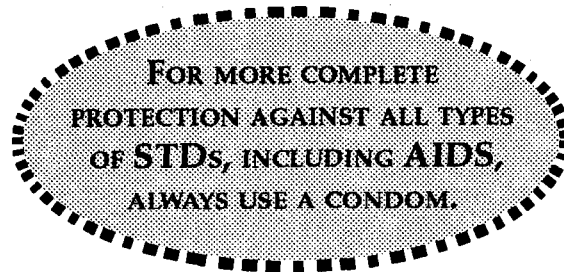
- ❖ Better love making because of not worrying about getting pregnant!
- ❖ Not using birth control that has bad side effects.
- ❖ Not stopping during sex to think about birth control.

Will I be able to get pregnant again?

A man should only get a vasectomy if he is sure he doesn't want any more children.

Does vasectomy protect against STDs?

No. STDs are passed in a man's semen, whether or not there are sperm in the semen.



TUBAL LIGATION

TUBAL LIGATION

The operation to sterilize a woman is called tubal ligation, a tubal, getting your tubes tied, or belly button surgery.

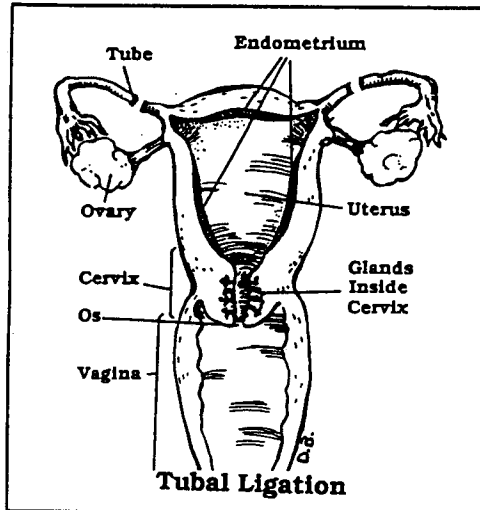
How does a tubal work?

When you have a tubal, the doctor cuts, burns or clips your tubes. After the operation, the egg can't get through the tube to meet the sperm. If the egg isn't fertilized by the sperm, you can't get pregnant. Your egg dissolves back into your body.

Once you have had your first period after the tubal, you don't have to use any other method of birth control again.

How is a tubal ligation done?

There are about four kinds of tubal surgery. Laparoscopy and mini-lap (mini-laparotomy) are the kinds usually done. The basics are the same for each kind of tubal. You can expect to have the operation in a hospital and to go home the same day or the next day.



Debbie Bryant

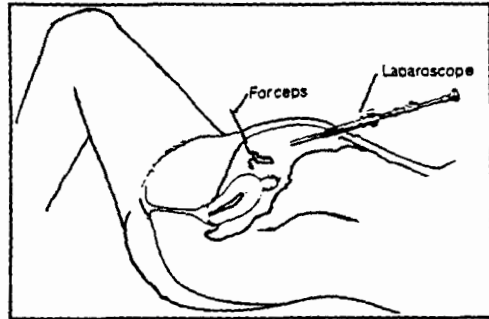
HOW WELL

DOES IT WORK?

A TUBAL IS ALMOST 100% EFFECTIVE. IF YOU HAVE A TUBAL JUST AFTER HAVING A BABY, A MISCARRIAGE, OR AN ABORTION, YOU ARE MORE LIKELY TO GET PREGNANT.

TUBAL LIGATION

Most doctors will give you an anaesthetic to put you to sleep. Some doctors just freeze the part where the operation will be. If you want to be awake, ask your doctor about freezing when you first talk to her.



From: CONTRACEPTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Laparoscopy

The doctor will make a small cut at your belly button and another on your lower belly. She will fill your belly with a harmless gas so that she can see your organs better. Then she will cut both of your fallopian tubes and close them off, by burning the ends. This is called "cauterizing". Then she will stitch the cuts closed.

The Mini-lap

For a mini-lap, your doctor will make a slightly bigger cut in your lower belly, about 1 to 1 1/2 inches long. She does not need to blow up your belly with gas. Your tubes may be tied closed, clipped closed, or burned. Ask your doctor how your tubes will be closed off before having the operation.

Surgery through the vagina:

Some tubals are done through a cut in the back wall of the vagina. Ask for a laparoscopy or a mini-lap because there is less risk of infection.

TUBAL LIGATION

After the operation:

- ❖ Have someone take you home.
- ❖ Rest for about 2 days.
- ❖ Don't lift anything heavy for a week.
- ❖ Take aspirin or codeine for minor pain.
- ❖ You can bathe or shower right away.
- ❖ Go back to your doctor a month later to make sure you're okay.

Just after the operation:

You may have pain in your lower belly, shoulder, or chest pain for a short time after the operation. The scar may burn, itch, or feel painful. This is normal, and should get better soon. If you have a fever, fainting spells or pain in your lower belly that gets worse, see your doctor. These are signs of infection.

Can a tubal hurt me?

About 10 out of every 100,000 women having a tubal die from the operation. Most of these deaths are from the general anaesthetic to put you to sleep during the operation. It is safer to have a local anaesthetic, so that you are awake but don't feel pain from the operation.

You are more likely to have an infection from a tubal if you have it done right after having a baby, a miscarriage or an abortion. Wait and have the tubal at least a month later.

Long term problems:

You may have more bleeding or longer periods after a tubal.

.....
Sometimes these changes happen because women have just come off the pill, not because of the tubal. They also sometimes happen to women who were not taking the pill before having a tubal.

You may have more premenstrual changes after a tubal. These are changes which happen just before your periods such as mood swings, or feeling angry, sad, or frustrated. Or you might get physical changes, like bloating, headaches, or sore breasts.

Pregnancy:

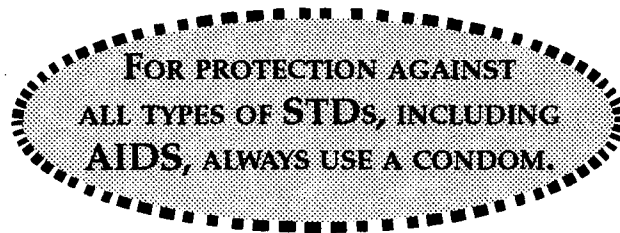
It is rare to get pregnant after a tubal, but if you do, you are more likely to have a tubal pregnancy. This is when the fertilized egg attaches to your tube instead of your uterus (see page 51). If you feel sharp pain or cramps on one side of your lower belly, feel dizzy or faint, and have spotting from your vagina, go to a doctor or clinic right away. *A TUBAL PREGNANCY IS A LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCY.*

What do women like about tubals?

You may enjoy lovemaking more because you don't have to be afraid of getting pregnant. You never have to worry about birth control again after a tubal.

Will I be able to get pregnant later on?

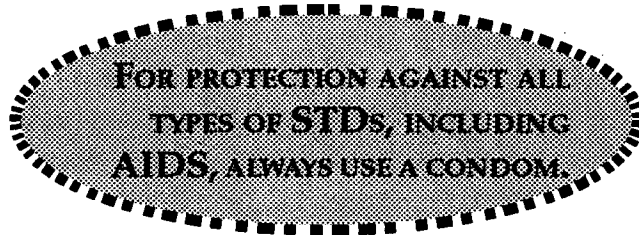
You should only get a tubal if you are sure you never want any more children. There is a long, complicated operation to undo a tubal, but it often doesn't work.



TUBAL LIGATION

Does a tubal protect against STDs?

No.



How can a tubal affect a woman's feelings?

You may feel sad, angry, or upset after a tubal, especially if you weren't sure you wanted the tubal. This is why you should take a long time to think about it before you have the tubal. If you are sure you want to have your tubes tied, you may still feel sad after. This is normal. These bad feelings will usually go away after a few months.



TUBAL LIGATION & VASECTOMY DECISIONMAKING

TUBAL LIGATION AND VASECTOMY

Deciding about sterilization:

The first question you should ask yourself is, "Do I want to be sterilized?" If you are in a relationship, you have two decisions to make. First, do we want one of us to be sterilized? Second, which one of us? This method is permanent so you want to be very sure before you decide.

Give yourself lots of time to think about it first. We suggest that you leave at least a month between the time you decide to be sterilized and when you have the operation. This will give you time so that you can cancel the operation if you change your mind or have doubts.

You shouldn't decide about sterilization when you're having a baby or an abortion. You may not feel the same as you will feel later on when you're not pregnant.

Neither operation affects your sexuality. The operation for the man is simpler and safer. He doesn't have to go to the hospital for a vasectomy. But if you have sex with more than one man, a tubal might be a better choice.

Do I want to be sterilized?

- ❖ Do I really want the vasectomy or tubal or is someone else pushing it?
- ❖ Am I sure I don't ever want more children?
- ❖ Am I old enough to know I won't want children later?
- ❖ What if my partner and I break up? Will I want children with someone new?

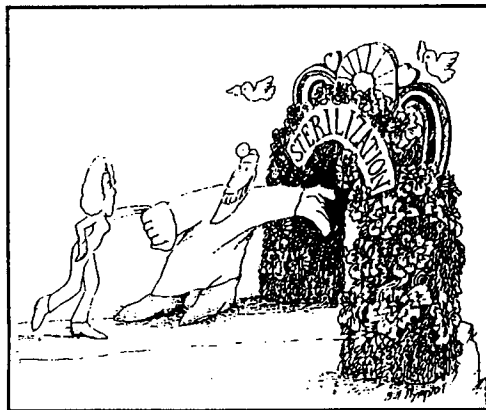
TUBAL LIGATION & VASECTOMY DECISIONMAKING

- ❖ If my partner dies, will I want children with someone new?
- ❖ If any of my children die, will I want more children?
- ❖ If I don't have any children, am I sure I don't want any?
- ❖ Will I feel sad or guilty if I don't have more children?
- ❖ If I found a birth control method I liked using, would I prefer not to be sterilized?
- ❖ Would I really like my partner, rather than me, to have the operation?

Sterilization abuse

No one has the right to force you to become sterilized. Doctors have sometimes pushed sterilization on women who have agreed to an abortion. Some women have not always known they had a choice when their social worker suggested becoming sterilized.

If you are poor, native, or an immigrant you may be more likely to face sterilization abuse. Remember, you always have the right to say no. Talk to your band, your community health worker, your women's centre, or legal aid if someone is trying to push you to become sterilized when you don't want to.



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ABORTION

Abortion is not a method of birth control. We are talking about it in this book because no matter how well your birth control method works and how well you use it, you may get pregnant when you don't want to.

We believe that women should have the right to decide whether to continue a pregnancy or not. It's often a very hard personal choice. If abortion is against your religion, or if you believe that abortion is wrong, we respect your decision not to have an abortion.

How do I decide what to do?

You have three choices when you find out you're pregnant and you don't want to be. The choices are:

- ❖ Continue the pregnancy and keep the baby.
- ❖ Continue the pregnancy and give the baby up for adoption
- ❖ Have an abortion.

You may be sure about what you want to do or it may be a hard choice.

Do I want to have a baby?

Try looking at your life right now. Think about life in one year. How about in five years? How would it be if you have a baby? What about if you don't? How do you feel about being pregnant? Are you feeling happy or unhappy? Does the thought of going on with the pregnancy feel exciting, or does it feel like a punishment? Often your feelings can give you a true idea of what you want to do.

ABORTION

Are you able to care for a baby right now? Do you have the extra money for food and clothes? If you have other children, can you care for another child? If you are on your own, can you get support from your family and friends to help you care for a child? If you have a partner, will he or she help you care for a child?

What about adoption?

If you are thinking about giving the baby up for adoption, talk to another woman who has done this. Giving up a baby can be a hard thing to do.

What about abortion?

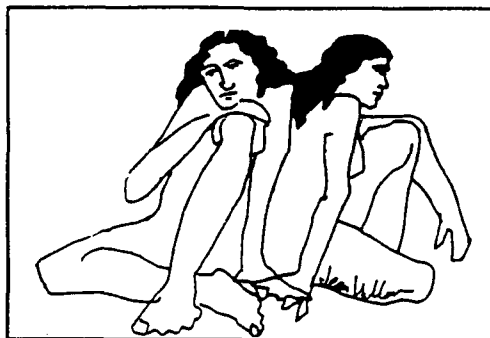
If you are thinking about having an abortion, you may be upset about the choice. This may be especially true if you have grown up thinking abortion is wrong. You may need to do a lot of soul searching and talking to friends to feel good about your choice. Your life is important too! What's best for you may not be what's hardest. You may know that you're not able to have a child now but that you want to later.

Who decides?

Don't let anyone pressure you into a decision. No one can force you to have an abortion. You have the right to decide if you want to have a baby. It is your body and your decision.

How can I get support?

Abortions are legal in Canada. Many women have abortions. Abor-



From: ISIS, Vol. 21

ABORTION

tion is still something many women feel a lot of shame about and don't talk about. Being pregnant when you don't want to be is hard. You may want to talk to your partner or a close woman friend, or to someone at a crisis centre. You will need someone who will listen to you, and someone to cry with if you are upset.

It is much harder to be pregnant and have an abortion if you keep it a secret. If you talk to a friend, she may have had an abortion herself, or she may know other women who've had abortions.

When is it best to have an abortion?

It is safest to have an abortion as soon as you can after your 6th week. In B.C., abortions can be done at the beginning of the 7th week.

How is an early abortion done?

If it is 14 weeks or less from the first day of your last period, the abortion is called a First Trimester Abortion. This is the safest, easiest time to have an abortion. You will have a suction abortion, also called a vacuum curettage abortion.

The abortion clinics use only local anaesthesia. With a local

HOW WELL DOES IT WORK?

THERE IS A VERY SMALL CHANCE THAT YOU WILL STILL BE PREGNANT AFTER THE ABORTION. ABOUT 2 WOMEN OUT OF 1,000 WILL STILL BE PREGNANT. THIS IS MOST LIKELY TO HAPPEN IF YOU HAVE YOUR ABORTION BEFORE 6 WEEKS. THIS IS BECAUSE THE FETUS IS VERY SMALL AND IT'S HARDER FOR THE DOCTOR TO KNOW IF EVERYTHING HAS BEEN TAKEN OUT OF YOUR UTERUS.

ABORTION

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you stay awake, but don't feel the abortion. In the hospital, you can either have a general anaesthetic, which puts you to sleep, or a local anaesthetic. If you want a local in the hospital, you need to ask your doctor ahead of time.

After giving you the anaesthetic, the doctor opens your cervix a little, then puts a tube through the opening in your cervix. This tube is attached to a vacuum machine which pulls the fetus and other tissue out of your uterus. Sometimes the doctor will then use a tool to gently scrape the inside of your uterus to make sure everything is out. This is a simple operation which takes about 10 minutes. You will be able to go home the same day.

What is a late abortion?

If you are more than 14 or 15 weeks pregnant when you have an abortion, it is called a late abortion. Sometimes women end up getting a late abortion because they can't talk to anyone about being pregnant. Sometimes they don't know that they're pregnant or they have trouble getting an abortion.

Late abortions are legal. If your doctor won't tell you how to get a late abortion, contact someone else. You could try:

- ❖ a women's centre
- ❖ public health clinic or public health nurse
- ❖ your social worker
- ❖ your family physician
- ❖ a crisis phone line
- ❖ The Vancouver Women's Health Collective

ABORTION

D&E:

When you are 16 - 19 weeks, you can have a type of abortion called a D&E (dilation and evacuation). This type of abortion is a lot like an early abortion, except that your cervix is opened wider. Not all doctors perform D&Es. If your doctor doesn't, she will perform a second trimester abortion.

Second trimester abortion:

Having a second trimester abortion is like going into labour. You will deliver the fetus just like in a late miscarriage. This is much harder on your body and it is also much harder for you emotionally than an earlier abortion.

For this kind of abortion you will go to the hospital and stay overnight. The doctor will give you a shot through your lower belly into your womb to start your labour. The shot is not very painful. Two kinds of shots are used, either saline (salt and water) or prostaglandin (a kind of hormone). Usually doctors use prostaglandin.

After the shot, you wait until you have contractions (labour pains). Your lower belly will get hard, and you will feel pain there or in your lower back. You may wait a few hours to a few days after the shot until contractions begin. You will have contractions until you push the fetus out.

Are abortions covered by medical insurance?

Abortions done in clinics and hospitals in Canada are covered by your provincial/territorial medical insurance.

What about abortions in the U.S.?

It is easy to get an abortion in the United States, but you have

ABORTION

to pay for it. The legal limit for abortions in the U.S. is 24 weeks. Abortions in the U.S. are expensive.

How safe is abortion?

An early abortion is a safe, quick operation, when it is done by a trained doctor. In a legal early abortion, 1 woman in 100,000 dies. In a late abortion 8 women in 100,000 die. A general anaesthetic, which puts you to sleep, is less safe than a local anaesthetic, which just takes away the feeling in one part of your body.

You can get an infection anytime you have an operation which opens up your cervix. This is more likely if you have either Chlamydia or Gonorrhoea, two types of STDs, when you get the abortion.

Don't put anything into your vagina for two weeks after an abortion so that you don't get an infection. Do not have a bath, do not douche and do not have intercourse or use tampons. Showers are OK. Some doctors will also give you antibiotics when you have an abortion, so that you won't get an infection afterwards.

It can be very dangerous to give yourself an abortion or have a friend do it by putting something through your cervix. This can cause tissue damage, pain, infection and bleeding. Women can become very sick or die from infection or bleeding.

Signs of infection

If you have any of these problems after an abortion, call your doctor right away:

- ❖ very heavy bleeding - more than 10 pads a day
- ❖ bleeding that doesn't stop in three weeks
- ❖ foul smelling discharge from your vagina or blood clots

ABORTION

- ❖ fever
- ❖ heavy cramps

Some women take herbs to have an abortion. This only works for women who haven't missed a period yet. You can be poisoned from taking too much of some herbs used for abortion. If you're going to try this, make sure you talk to someone who knows a lot about herbs.

Will I be able to get pregnant again?

Most women can get pregnant again at any time. If you had a serious infection and your weren't treated with antibiotics right away, you may have trouble getting pregnant.

After 5 or more early abortions or after more than 1 late abortion, your cervix may become weaker. The chances of having a late miscarriage or of going into labour early are greater than for a woman who has not had many abortions.

How will I feel after the abortion?

You may feel relieved that you are not pregnant anymore. Or you may feel sad that you were not able to have a baby now. It's normal to feel sad or emotional after an abortion.

It's important to give yourself time to cry if you need to, and to talk to someone you are close to. If you found it very hard to be pregnant and have an abortion, you may find that it affects your sexual relationship. You may want to change birth control methods if your method failed and you don't trust it any more. Or you may want to be extra careful about birth control. Talk to your partner about what you're feeling.

WORDS

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Abdomen: Your lower belly.

Abortion: An operation to end a pregnancy on purpose.

AIDS: AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. It is a Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) that can be passed from person to person during sex. It can also be passed by sharing needles.

Birth Control: Anything that keeps you from getting pregnant when you're having sex with your partner.

Bladder: The sack that holds your urine inside your body.

Cervix: The lower part of your uterus. See page 2.

Chlamydia: Chlamydia is a common STD passed from person to person during sex. You can have it without any signs such as itching or pain. It can become a serious health problem if it spreads from your vagina to your uterus or tubes.

Contraception: Another name for birth control.

Discharge: Liquid or mucus that drips from the vagina. It may be clear, white or yellow. It is normal to have discharge from your vagina.

Douche: Washing inside the vagina with a stream of water. It is not necessary to douche unless you have an infection. The vagina keeps itself clean naturally.

Egg: A woman's eggs come from her ovaries. One egg is about the size of a pinprick. When an egg joins with a sperm from a man, a woman gets pregnant.

Ejaculation (to ejaculate): When a man has an orgasm (comes), and semen comes out of his penis.

Embryo: When an egg from a woman and a sperm from a

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man join, they make an embryo. The embryo is the first stage of what will become a baby.

Estrogen: One of the hormones made by your ovaries.

Fertile: Able to get pregnant or have children.

Fertility: For a woman, fertility means being able to get pregnant. For a man, fertility means being able to make sperm which can join with an egg so a woman can get pregnant.

Fetus: The embryo starts being called a fetus from the second month of pregnancy. At this time, it starts to have a shape with body parts that can be recognized.

Glands: Body organs which make a chemical or a liquid.

Gonorrhea:(also called the clap) Gonorrhea is a common STD which can be passed from person to person during sex. It can become a serious health problem if it spreads from a woman's vagina to her uterus and tubes.

Hormones: Chemicals made by one part of the body which tell other parts of the body what to do.

Infertility: Someone is infertile if they have problems getting pregnant or having children. Doctors define infertility as trying to get pregnant for one year without getting pregnant. Sometimes it just takes longer, and within 2 years a woman can get pregnant. Infertility can be a man's problem, a woman's problem, or a couple's problem.

Intercourse: Sex between a woman and a man with the man's penis in the woman's vagina.

Menstrual cycle: The time between the first day of one period and the first day of the next period. For most women, a menstrual cycle is about one month long.

Menstruation: Having your period.

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- Mucus:** A thick liquid which may be sticky, stringy or slimy.
- Orgasm:** When a woman or a man comes, or reaches the peak of sexual excitement.
- Ovaries:** See Women's Reproductive Organs, page 2.
- Ovulation (to ovulate):** When an egg pops out of the ovary, usually about midway through the menstrual cycle.
- Penis:** See Men's Reproductive Organs, page 4.
- PID (Pelvic Inflammatory Disease):** An infection of your uterus and tubes that can be dangerous if it spreads and can cause long-term problems like infertility and pain.
- PMS (Premenstrual Syndrome):** Changes in mood and body changes which happen before your period.
- Progesterone:** One of the hormones made by your ovaries.
- Scrotum:** See Men's Reproductive Organs, page 4.
- Semen:** The liquid which comes out of a man's penis when he ejaculates (comes).
- Side Effect:** A negative reaction caused by your body reacting to a drug. For example: a headache caused by birth control pills.
- Sperm:** Millions of sperm are in semen, the liquid that comes out when a man comes. Sperm are too small to see. Just one sperm joins with a woman's egg for her to get pregnant.
- Spermicide:** A cream or jelly that kills sperm on contact.
- Spotting:** Light bleeding before, after or between periods.
- STDs (sexually transmitted diseases):** These are diseases and infections which are passed from person to person during sex. Some common types of STDs are: gonorrhea, chlamydia, herpes, syphilis, and AIDS.
- Sterilization:** An operation which makes a person unable to ever have children again.



Tubes (fallopian tubes): See Women's Repro. Organs page 2.

Uterus (womb): See Women's Reproductive Organs page 2.

Vagina: See Women's Reproductive Organs page 2.

Vas Deferens: See Men's Reproductive Organs page 4.

Vulva: A woman's outside sexual organs.

Womb: Another name for your uterus.

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WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

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Birth Control and Abortion

Planned Parenthood B.C.
#305-2902 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6K 2G8
(604) 731-4252

**The Vancouver Women's
Health Collective**
#219 - 1675 W. 8th
Vancouver, BC V6J 1V2
(604) 736-5262

**Planned Parenthood
Alberta**
#106 - 223 12th Avenue
W.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2R 0G9
(403) 667-2970

**Victoria Faulkner
Women's Centre**
302 Steele St.
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C5
(403) 667-2693

Natural Family Planning

S.E.R.E.N.A. B.C.
1210 Hammond Avenue
Coquitlam, BC V3K 2P1
(604) 520-0152

S.E.R.E.N.A Alberta
2220-C 7th Ave. N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2N 0Z6
(403) 284-2708

WOOMB B.C.
1506 Dansey Avenue
Coquitlam, B.C. V3K 3J1
(604) 936-4472

Natural Family Planning
829 17th Street S.
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 3E1
(403) 329-0525

**Ovulation Method
Teachers Association**
P.O. Box 10-1780
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-1780

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AIDS

Pacific Aids Resource Centre
1107 Seymour St.
Vancouver, BC V6B 5S8
687-2437

AIDS Calgary Awareness Assoc.
223 12th Avenue, SW
Calgary, Alberta T2R 0G9
(403) 262-2522

**AIDS Network of
Edmonton Society**
10233 98th Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0M7
(403) 424-4767

**Communicable Diseases
Officer**
Medical Services Branch
2 Hospital Road
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 3H8
(403) 667-5202

Abortion

**BC Coalition for Abortion
Clinics**
#219 - 1675 W. 8th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6J 1V2
(604) 736-2800



Rape/Violence Helplines

**Vancouver Rape Relief
and Women's Shelter**
(604)872-8212

**Women Against Violence
Against Women**
(604) 255-6344
(604) 255-6228 - TTY

Organisations

**Canadian PID Society
(Pelvic Inflammatory
Disease)**
P.O. Box 33804, Station D
Vancouver, BC V6J 4L6
(604) 684-5704

D.E.S. Action Canada
5890 Monkland, Suite 104
Montreal, Quebec H4A 1G2

*For a list of other books and
health fact sheets available
from The Vancouver
Women's Health Collective,
please write to:*

**The Vancouver Women's
Health Collective**
#219 - 1675 West 8th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6J 1V2
(604) 736-5262