



**cute...**

YOUR **COSMO** GUIDE TO

# contraception

HOW NOT TO GET PREGNANT



**Babies smell so nice: Like apricots, organic butt cream, and possibility. But it's okay if, at this moment, you'd rather inhale other pleasures: the lime-tequila scent of happy-hour margaritas, a dab of perfume before you head out for a date, or even a greasy diner breakfast and a cup of coffee the morning after. That too can smell like possibility.**

When you want fun and freedom more than you want a baby, you need contraception. But it's not so simple. Nearly 75 percent of women who don't want a baby have had unprotected sex and 54 percent have had a pregnancy scare, reveals a survey of 1,000 women, ages 18 to 29, by Cosmo, The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, and Bedsider.org, conducted by the research firm TRU.

It's not that you're irresponsible. In our survey and a series of focus groups, you told us you want to get this right. But a lot of people are getting in your way—and we don't mean only the guys in Congress who've lately turned a personal issue political. Your partners can be pushy, your doctors dismissive, and your sex-ed teacher...what sex-ed teacher? "If no one talks about birth control," says Sarah Brown, CEO of The National Campaign, "how can we expect women to use it?" Let's start talking. —SARA AUSTIN

**What's That Feel Like?**



**iud** "After my doctor used a speculum to open my vagina, I felt a sharp pain as she pushed in the ParaGard IUD. I cramped for a day and had spotting and painful periods for six months. But then, the symptoms disappeared." —KELLY, 26, MARATHON, FL

"I foamed it up under water to activate the spermicide before putting it inside. But it took serious Spider-Man moves to get it out." —ELIZABETH, 32, NYC

**sponge**



"You pick up the tiny square bandage at the pharmacy. It's easy to hide. And it has never come off in the shower." —JESS, 32, BETHESDA, MD

**the patch**

YOU'VE GOT

# options

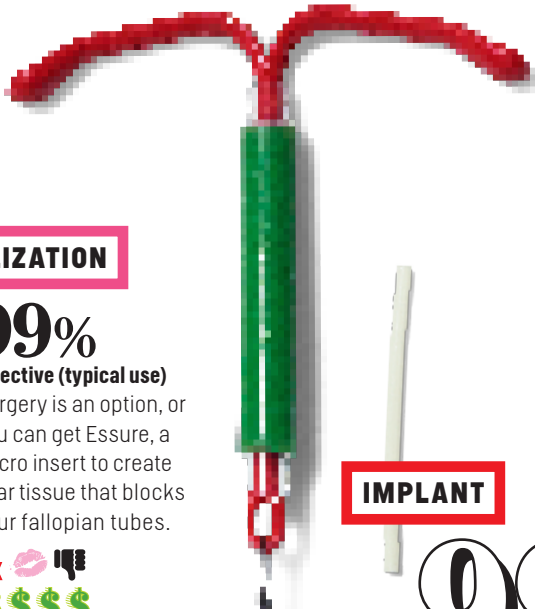


**STERILIZATION**

**99%**

**Effective (typical use)**  
Surgery is an option, or you can get Essure, a micro insert to create scar tissue that blocks your fallopian tubes.

Rx   
 \$\$\$



**IMPLANT**

**99%**

**Effective**  
The matchstick-size implant gives you three years of protection.

Rx   
 \$



**PLAN B**

**89%**

**Effective**  
OTC emergency contraception is most effective for three days; Rx Ella, up to five.

\$\$\$\$\$



**RING**

**91%**  
**Effective**

Unless you want to take it out during sex, the NuvaRing stays put for three weeks.

Rx   
 \$\$\$



**SHOT**

**94%**

**Effective**  
Every three months, you go to your doc for a Depo-Provera injection.

Rx   
 \$\$



**FEMALE CONDOM**

**79%**

**Effective**  
They're latex-free, so you don't risk an allergic reaction.

\$\$\$

**THE KEY**

**Rx**  
 Prescription Necessary

Hookup Ready

STD Protection

**\$**  
 Cost Per Year  
 (scored 0 to 5)

Potential for Side Effects  
 (scored 0 to 5)

**BIRTH-CONTROL PILLS**

**91%**  
**Effective**

Missed a pill? You can take it up to 23 hours late (or 3 hours for progestin-only mini pills).

Rx   
 \$\$\$



**female condom**

"I pinch the ring on the closed end of this clear, baggy pouch and stick it in my vagina. An inch or so hangs out; his penis goes there. After having sex, I squeeze and twist the outer ring to trap his semen, then pull it out." —JOANN, 28, KANSAS CITY, MO



### the shot

“Every three months, I bring my prescription to the student health center and get a shot at the top of my butt. It’s sometimes sore for a day or two. I’ve heard weight-gain horror stories with the shot, but that hasn’t been an issue for me.”—ERIKA, 19, COLUMBIA, MD



### PATCH

# 91%

Effective

Affix Ortho Evra to your butt, arm, or stomach; change it once a week.



### SPERMICIDE

# 72%

Effective

It works by killing sperm, but it’s more effective with another method.



### SPONGE

# 88%

Effective

You get protection for 24 hours after inserting it.



### DIAPHRAGM

# 88%

Effective

Use it with spermicide, and wait six hours after sex to remove it.



### CAP

# 86%

Effective

This silicone device can be inserted a few hours before sex.



### MALE CONDOM

# 82%

Effective

If it’s latex, use only water-based lubes—no oils, no whipped cream.



### ABSTINENCE

# 100%

Effective

ID a backup method just in case your lock-down fails.

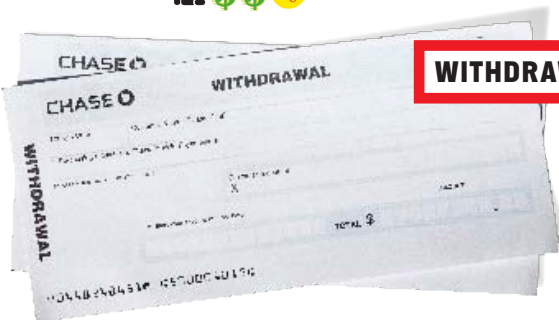


### FERTILITY AWARENESS

# 88%

Effective

You’ll have to take your temp and check cervical mucus regularly.



### WITHDRAWAL

# 78%

Effective

Better than nothing (but harder done than said).



### implant

“My doctor gave me a numbing shot in my arm, then inserted a tiny rod between my biceps and triceps muscles.”—SHELBY, 19, COLLEGE PARK, MD



### the ring

“There’s no applicator, like a tampon, so you fold the soft, flexible ring over and use your fingers to push it up in your vagina as far as you can.”—SYDNY, 20, GREENWICH, CT



### diaphragm

“A doctor fit me for the right size of this rubber cup. You squeeze it and push it so it blocks your cervix. It’s easy, but messy, to pull out. I’ve gotten yeast infections from forgetting to remove it.”—MORGAN, 29, ATLANTA, GA



SOURCES: BEDSIDER.ORG; THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT TEEN AND UNPLANNED PREGNANCY; MARY JANE MINKIN, MD, CLINICAL PROFESSOR OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY AT YALE MEDICAL SCHOOL

LET'S TALK ABOUT...

# condoms

He's resistant, you're a little shy, our survey says. That's fixable.

"I said okay to going without one in the heat of the moment."

—KATHLEEN, 19, WHITE PLAINS, NY

"Who's supposed to buy the condom? In an ideal world, everyone has a condom!"

—JESSICA, 25, LOS ANGELES, CA

"I am on the [Depo-Provera] shot but am paranoid, so my boyfriend wears a condom at the end of the shot [cycle]. I don't feel awkward asking him, but it's nice that I don't have to."

—ERIKA, 19, COLUMBIA, MD

"He was bummed out that I had one. He'd been getting away with not using one."

—DELMY, 25, FALLS CHURCH, VA

"Men and women are afraid to bring up condoms—it's a mood killer."

—CHRISTINE, 23, ATLANTA, GA

"Before a party, I put a condom in my bra as a reminder to have safe sex."

—SHELBY, 19, COLLEGE PARK, MD

# 67%

SAY BUYING CONDOMS IS REALLY EMBARRASSING.

"There's a gender stereotype. It is okay for men to have condoms on them, but if a woman were to go out and have them in her purse, it's not okay."

—MICHELLE, 23, WASHINGTON, D.C.

"I carry a condom, and it's okay because it's a condom I like. Guys buy cheap ones."

—BROOKE, 25, ROCKVILLE, MD

## A Guy Responds

(Who's also a doctor)

"It's true. Men often don't have a condom. It could be because sex doesn't feel as good when they're wearing one... although having sex with a condom feels better than not having sex. Or sometimes guys think they'll look too forward if they've got one and it'll freak you out. Or they just forgot. Whatever the case, I'd tell him this: 'If we're going to have sex, a condom is going on your penis.' If he pushes back? Don't hook up with that guy. Carrying a condom doesn't make you promiscuous, it shows a healthy attitude and the value you have in yourself. The good guys won't just respect that, it'll be a turn-on."

—IAN KERNER, PHD, A SEX THERAPIST IN NYC

**13%**  
OF YOU SAY NOT USING CONDOMS IS A WAY TO SHOW A RELATIONSHIP IS MORE SERIOUS.



# CONDOMS ARE NOW *sexy* (YOU'RE WELCOME)

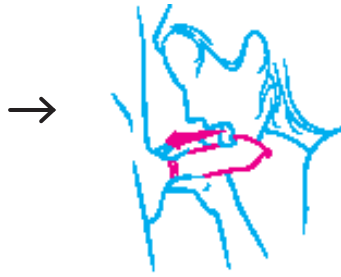
➔ Nearly 40 percent of you say sex feels better without a condom. Until now! We don't blame you for being skeptical, but trust Cosmo: rolling on a rubber can make serious sparks fly. Try these moves.

## (THE MOVE)

## (HOW TO)

### *the Mouth Master*

Get low, like you're about to give your partner oral sex, and roll the condom on using your hands, tracing your tongue down the back of his penis as you do.



### *the Slick Rick*

Squeeze a couple of drops of a lubricant inside the condom. Just don't go overboard—too much lube can cause the condom to slip off. Our spies report that the sensation of the condom with lube inside is amazing.



### *the Breast Remedy*

Put the condom on a quarter of the way (it should sheath just the tip). Lean over, position his penis between your breasts, then squeeze them together and use them to work the condom down over his shaft.



### *the Move With a View*

Have you heard? Men are very visual creatures. Tap into that by applying the condom in a 69 position (with you on top). He can give you some oral pleasure while you work your magic down below.



### *the Footsie Roll*

Place the condom securely on the tip with your hands, then lean back and balance on your forearms. Place your feet on either side of his penis, and gently roll the condom down with your big toes.



—JESSICA KNOLL

SOURCE: EMILY MORSE, HOST OF *SEX WITH EMILY*, A RADIO SHOW AND PODCAST ON SIRIUSXM SATELLITE RADIO

## WHAT TO SAY WHEN HE SAYS “No, Thanks”

### He Says

“What if we just start off without a condom? I'll put one on later.”

### You Say

“We're not going to want to stop once we start. Plus, some of your super sperm may still escape.”

### He Says

“I'm so big, they don't fit me.”

### You Say

“Wow, humblebrag.” JK, don't say that. Say, “And that's why they make the magnum size.”

### He Says

“I'll pull out.”

### You Say

“It feels better when you stay inside me when you come.”

### He Says

“It doesn't feel as good with a condom on.”

### You Say

“I know, but I can't come at all when I'm worried that I might end up pregnant.”

### He Says

“You're on the Pill, and we're in a relationship. Why do we need condoms?”

### You Say

“I want to protect you, and I'm sure you want to protect me. Why don't we get tested for STIs and show each other our results? Then we can have a celebratory dinner, go home, and have crazy, condom-free sex.”

—J.K.

SOURCE: KATHARINE WHITE, MD, CHIEF OF THE GENERALIST DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF OB-GYN AT BAYSTATE MEDICAL CENTER

COSMO  
TRIED

GLOVES  
WE  
LOVE

AND  
TESTED

- 1. TROJAN ECSTASY FIRE AND ICE** “I noticed a pleasurable tingle—li'l bit fire, li'l bit ice. Better yet, it didn't feel like there was much of a condom there at all.”
- 2. LIFESTYLES FUN BUMPS** “The bumps were surprisingly enjoyable—obvious enough that I noticed the sensation but subtle enough that it wasn't uncomfortable.”
- 3. TROJAN SENSITIVITY BARESKIN** “Using this is like having sex without a condom—both of us could barely feel it.”
- 4. ONE GLOWING PLEASURES** “We laughed seeing him aglow in the dark. That made the sex looser and crazier than usual.”

—DIANDRA BARNWELL

LET'S TALK ABOUT...

# the pill

It's the method you use most, but it also worries you. Here's the truth.



**19%**  
OF YOU ARE AFRAID  
OF WEIGHT GAIN.

**"Now that I'm in a relationship, I take [the Pill] and I love it."**

—KYLE, 22, COOPERSTOWN, NY

**"The Pill hasn't been around that long, and I'm scared of the long-term effects."**

—ERIKA, 19, COLUMBIA, MD

**"I had awful, awful side effects.... I was miserable. I don't know if I would go back on it."**

—LEAH, 21, WEXFORD, PA

**"The Pill is such a pain in the ass. You take it every day; that's annoying."**

—MICHELLE, 23, WASHINGTON, D.C.

**"My mom was accepting when I first got on the Pill for bad cramps. But six years later, she will not stop telling me to get off this pill. She says every single ailment I have is related to birth control."**

—DEBORAH, 25, WASHINGTON, D.C.

**25%**  
OF YOU ARE AFRAID OF LONG-TERM SIDE EFFECTS FROM HORMONAL METHODS.

**"I went off because I felt I was messing with my mood and my body. I don't know what's normal for me anymore."**

—MEG, 25, NORTH ANDOVER, MA

## A Doc Responds

**"Approved by the FDA in 1960, birth-control pills are one of the most studied drugs ever. There's even a good chance your grandma was on the Pill. Which helps explain why well-meaning family members perpetuate some myths: old data. They likely were on one of the higher-dose oral contraceptives taken off the market in the late 1980s, which had really nasty side effects and health concerns like blood clots. Today's low-dose pills have far fewer side effects and can clear up acne, reduce the risk of pelvic inflammatory disease, and alleviate iron-deficiency anemia."**

—EVE ESPY, MD, MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO CENTER FOR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

## YOUR BIG CONCERNS



### The Pill...

#### Cancer Risk

Your risk for breast and cervical cancers is a smidge higher if you're on the Pill. But you'll also significantly reduce your risk for endometrial, uterine, and ovarian cancers.

#### Fertility

Studies show that the Pill doesn't impact fertility. In fact, it's used to treat conditions that make it harder to get knocked up, such as PCOS and endometriosis.

#### Hormone Overload

There's nothing unsafe requiring you to take a break from the Pill. And if you go off it, your bod will produce its own hormones: the baby-making kind.

# “I always FEEL GREAT ON THE PILL!” (SAID NO ONE, EVER)

Our survey reveals that more than half of you have avoided the Pill because of side effects, and we don't blame you. Who wants to use something that makes you feel crappy? But while we often call it “the” Pill, there are 38 formulas on the market—plus other hormonal methods like the shot, patch, implant, and IUDs—and they all affect your body differently. So think about trying another brand.

## MIGRAINES

They're usually caused by a drop in estrogen levels before your period, which you get with monthly pills, the patch, and NuvaRing.

**What to Do** Consult your doctor right away. Reducing your periods with extended-cycle birth-control pills (Seasonale, Seasonique, Lybrel) or long-acting methods (IUDs, the shot, the implant) will help prevent menstrual-related migraines.

## NAUSEA

Methods that contain estrogen—combination pills, the patch, NuvaRing—tend to cause an upset stomach.

**What to Do** The puke-y feelings typically subside within a few months as your body adjusts to hormones. Pills with low-dose estrogen or estrogen-free methods, like the shot, implant, and IUDs, are best for avoiding nausea. Take pills with meals or right before bed rather than on an empty stomach.

## FIZZLED SEX DRIVE

Hormones in combination birth-control pills increase levels of sex-hormone-binding globulins (SHBG), a protein that attaches to testosterone and renders it inactive. Less testosterone activity means less desire to boink.

**What to Do** Low- or no-hormone methods, like IUDs, don't suck up testosterone, so they're less likely to dampen your sex drive. Give your new method some time to kick in. It can take six months for your SHBG levels to go back down.

## SPOTTING

Pills that are low in estrogen can cause breakthrough bleeding, because without enough estrogen, your uterine lining starts to shed. Long-acting methods like IUDs, the implant, and shot may cause spotting for six months. (Your period may stop after that.)

**What to Do** If you have spotting after three months on pills or six months on a long-acting method, your MD may recommend a monophasic (meaning the same hormone dose in each pill) combination pill that has more estrogen, like Yasmin, Ortho-Cyclen, or Seasonique.

## MOOD SWINGS

Experts don't know why, but progestins cause moodiness in some women. That means any hormonal method could be a contributing factor.

**What to Do** Progestin types vary across pills, so simply switching to a new one or a different type of birth control can make a difference.

## ACNE

Depo-Provera and the implant are progestin-only methods that may increase oil production, triggering breakouts. Progestins in the Mirena and Skyla IUDs are confined to the uterus, so they won't make acne worse but they won't make it go away.

**What to Do** Wait a couple of months to let your body adjust. Combined estrogen and progestin pills have reduced levels of hormones that regulate oil production, giving you clearer skin. If you like your progestin-only pill, talk to your derm—there are lots of treatments for acne.

## PAINFUL OR HEAVY PERIODS

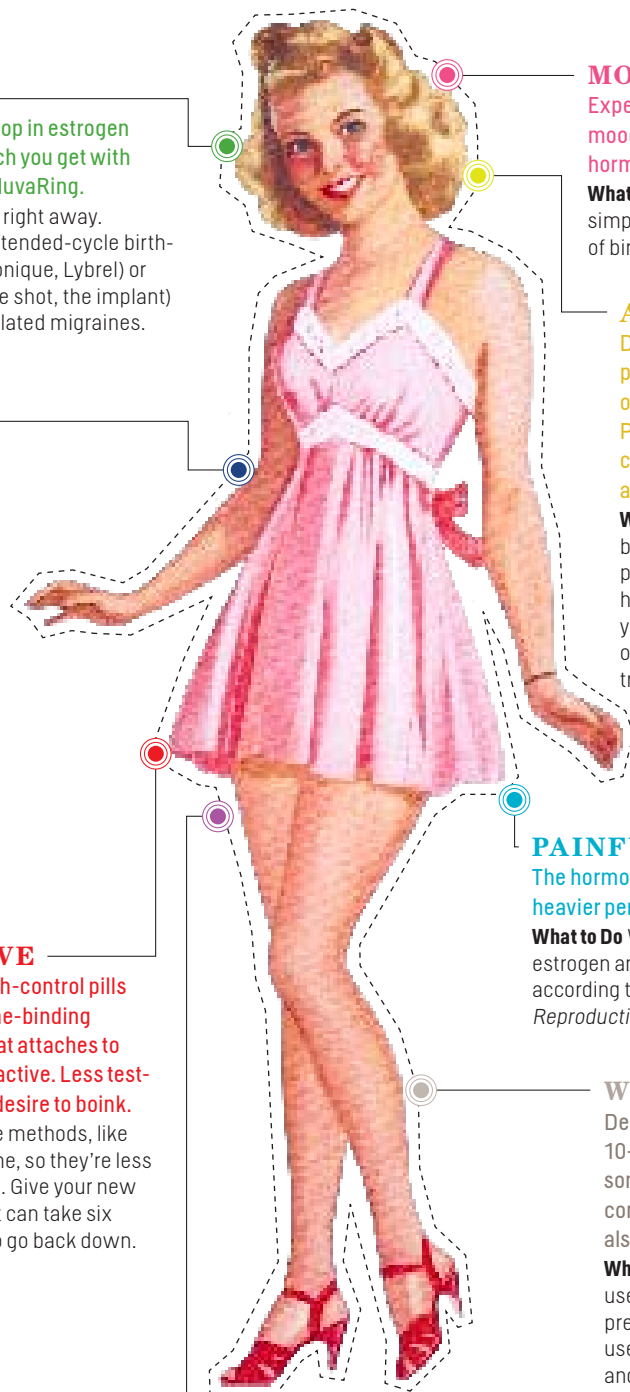
The hormone-free ParaGard IUD can cause heavier periods and more cramps.

**What to Do** Women who take combined pills with both estrogen and progestin experience less painful periods, according to a 30-year study in the journal *Human Reproduction*. The Mirena and Skyla IUDs can also help.

## WEIGHT GAIN

Depo-Provera has been associated with a 10-pound weight gain with long-term use in some women. Methods with estrogen, like combination pills, the patch, and NuvaRing, can also cause fluid retention, so you feel bloated.

**What to Do** IUDs are a good alternative. ParaGard uses copper ions rather than hormones to prevent egg fertilization, and Mirena and Skyla use only progestin. If you like BCPs, both Yaz and Yasmin use a type of progestin called drospirenone that minimizes bloating.



—KELLYMICKLE

SOURCES: COLLEEN KRAJEWSKI, MD, OB-GYN AT THE JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL; MARY JANE MINKIN, MD, CLINICAL PROFESSOR OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY AT YALE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



LET'S TALK ABOUT...

# your doctor

*This is not a love match. But it can be.*

"I can be more honest and open with the doctors at college than with the ones at home."

—ALEXIS, 19, LOS ANGELES, CA

"I feel like my doctor is unintentionally judgmental. He says, 'You use condoms, right? You don't binge drink, right?' It makes it hard to be honest."

—CAILEY, 21, SCOTTSDALE, AZ

"A doctor told me I shouldn't get an IUD because I wasn't married."

—KELLY, 26, MARATHON, FL

"I love my gynecologist. He actually knows what he is talking about."

—ERIKA, 19, COLUMBIA, MD

"I lied and said I wasn't sexually active, and my doctor said, 'That's good!' End of conversation."

—SHELBY, 19, COLLEGE PARK, MD

# 27%

**OF YOU AREN'T COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT BC WITH YOUR GYNECOLOGIST.**

"They check your height, but they never ask about side effects."

—BROOKE, 25, ROCKVILLE, MD

## A Doc Responds

"It's really common for women to feel lukewarm about their gynecologist, whether that's because the doctor is snotty or judge-y or the two of you just don't click. But you need a person you can talk to about anything, who will look out for your physical and emotional well-being. To find one, ask friends, coworkers, and other doctors you trust—your dermatologist, your dentist—who they see. Doctors have high standards for their own care."

—COSMO CONTRIBUTOR JENNIFER ASHTON, MD, AN OB-GYN IN ENGLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY

# 35%

**OF YOU WISH YOUR DOCTORS WERE MORE HELPFUL IN FINDING YOU THE RIGHT METHOD.**

## take charge

# 3

**THINGS YOU SHOULD NEVER BE AFRAID TO SAY IN THE STIRRUPS**



### Icebreaker

**"The ring made me a bloated beast."**

MDs say patients often complain that "so-and-so method didn't work for me," but they don't give a reason why. That part is crucial in determining what will work. The more specifics, the better.

### Icebreaker

**"I'm thinking about trying an IUD."**

You may have to bring up this option, because some docs have the old-timey belief that IUDs are only for women with children. The latest science says they're safe for any woman.

### Icebreaker

**"Honestly, I can't afford it."**

Don't be afraid to tell your physician that you're broke—she might have advice (and free samples). Family-planning clinics offer the best deals; find one at [HHS.gov/opa](http://HHS.gov/opa).

—J.K.

SOURCE: KATHARINE WHITE, MD



## The 3 Docs You Must Dump

1. **The moralist.** Birth control is your right.
2. **The doc you've seen since age 6.** Grown-ups need a gyno.
3. **The herbalist.** Plants do not prevent pregnancy!

# abstinence

ED DIDN'T COVER THIS

**CAN I SKIP MY PERIOD BY NEVER TAKING PLACEBOS?**

Yes. It's totally fine to skip the inactive pills.

**CAN I GET PREGNANT FROM ANAL SEX? ORAL SEX?**

The odds aren't zero. Semen has to get inside your vagina—tough to do via the anus and mouth—but fingers and hands could move semen there.

**IF I FORGET MY PILL, CAN I GET ONE FROM A FRIEND?**

Not a good idea. Each brand has a unique formula. Even pills in the same package can be different!

**IS IT TRUE AN IUD OR THE RING CAN FALL OUT?**

Rarely, an IUD slips out of the uterus (since you asked, it's most often during a BM), and a doctor must reinsert it. Ditto for the ring. But you can just rinse it off with warm water and reinsert it immediately.

**WILL ANTIBIOTICS SCREW WITH MY PILLS?**

No, unless it's Rifampin or Rifabutin, used to treat tuberculosis. But some Rx meds decrease the Pill's effectiveness, as will St. John's wort. Ask your doc if you need a backup method.

**WHAT ABOUT MOLLY? POT?**

Recreational drugs don't affect hormonal birth control...if you remember to use it.

**I DRANK TOO MUCH AND THREW UP LAST NIGHT...WILL MY PILL STILL WORK?**

If you vomited within three hours of taking your pill, count it as missed. Take another active pill—and if you're on a progestin-only pill, also use condoms for 48 hours.

**Got a question we missed?**  
Text it to Planned Parenthood at 53634.

—LIZ PLOSSER

SOURCE: DEBORAH NUCATOLA, MD, SENIOR DIRECTOR, MEDICAL SERVICES, PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION OF AMERICA

**! EC FOR ALL** The FDA now allows sales of emergency contraception (EC) to all women, including teens. Don't wait for an emergency—keep some on hand.

LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR...

# backup plan

You need a safety net. And that's okay.

"EC is a backup. There is no guarantee it could work. It's just a precaution if something goes wrong. You shouldn't rely on it."

—LEAH, 21, WEXFORD, PA

"Just the name is bad. Plan B. It's like 'Oh, my Plan A didn't work, so I have to take this.'"

—JORDAN, 24, BOSTON, MA

"I feel like when you get Plan B or a pregnancy test, you feel like a failure or that you did something wrong."

—BRITTANY, 21, WASHINGTON, D.C.

"I knew someone whose boyfriend used condoms incorrectly. She didn't want to have an awkward conversation, so she just used Plan B all the time."

—SYDNY, 20, GREENWICH, CT

"Plan B was the rage on college campuses."

—DINAH, 25, FORT LAUDERDALE, FL

"There's a stigma of someone buying Plan B, and people are judging you for it."

—SOPHIE, 21, EL PASO, TX

"I've heard that if I ever took it, I would be debilitated and just horribly sick."

—SACHA, 26, LOS ANGELES, CA

"Sometimes, I buy EC just because I get so paranoid."

—BROOKE, 25, ROCKVILLE, MD

"A lot of people believe emergency contraception is the abortion pill. That's not what it is."

—IMANI, 20, GLEN ALLEN, VA

**A Doc Responds**

"The emergency contraception formulas sold over-the-counter—such as Plan B One-Step and Next Choice One Dose—are progestin-only pills that pose no medical risks, even with repeated use. Ella is a prescription-only EC that has a different active ingredient that delays ovulation and may prevent implantation. It's also very safe, although some women feel nauseated after taking it. Still, there's a reason it's not called Plan A. If you used EC as your only form of contraception for a year and had sex regularly, your pregnancy risk would be about 20 percent—high compared to other methods. If you're using EC a lot, it's time to find a better method that works for you."

—JAMES TRUSSELL, PHD, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR AND FOUNDER OF THE EC-INFO WEBSITE NOT-2-LATE.COM

## Does Your Body Want YOU TO MESS UP ?????

WE'RE ALL HARDWIRED TO PROCREATE, SAYS EVOLUTIONARY ANTHROPOLOGIST ELIZABETH PILLSWORTH, PHD. BUT YOU CAN OVERRIDE YOUR INNER CAVEWOMAN.

**Cosmo:** One in four women we surveyed agreed, "When it's my time to get pregnant, it'll happen." Does every woman's brain subconsciously want to get pregnant?

**Elizabeth Pillsworth:** It's very likely. Evolution doesn't need us to want to have babies. It needs us to have sex to pass on our genes to the next generation.

**Cosmo:** Can our body also shut down if it's not a good time to get pregnant?

**E.P.:** Only in extreme conditions—think famine or war. Not a one-night stand, not oops situations. And definitely not rape.

**Cosmo:** We have sex even when we don't want a baby....

**E.P.:** People can have sex whenever, so sex must serve functions other than just reproduction. It may be used to obtain resources, evaluate a potential partner, or cement social relationships.

**Cosmo:** Does our evolutionary drive affect sexual desire?

**E.P.:** It drives our choice in men. It's not that women, when they're ovulating, are like "I'd like to get pregnant with that guy because he has good genes." It's that they find the strong guy to be attractive and it turns them on.

**Cosmo:** In our fertile zone, are we more likely to say "Screw it, skip the condom"?

**E.P.:** That question hasn't been studied, but research suggests women may put themselves in situations where they'll engage in sexual behavior—for example, going to parties or drinking.

**Cosmo:** Can we stick to a conscious goal of not getting pregnant if our body subconsciously wants to?

**E.P.:** Yes. You can use contraception until you want a baby. Your body is not in the driver's seat. You are.

—L.P.

A woman in a pink bikini is being measured by a tailor. The tailor's hands are visible, one holding a measuring tape around her waist and the other resting on her hip. The background is a bright yellow.

OFFICIALLY *not* BIRTH CONTROL



**Diet-soda douche** / Pushing really hard on your belly button / Sex standing up / A plastic-wrap, balloon, bread, or chicken-skin “condom” / Jumping up and down after sex / Sneezing / Sex in a hot tub / Taking aspirin after sex / Pot / Not having an orgasm