



# Contraception

## Get the quick facts



Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health



Geraldton  
Regional  
Aboriginal  
Medical  
Service



# Male Condoms

## What is it?

The male condom is the only male contraceptive device.

## How does it work?

Condoms fit closely over an erect penis to collect semen and stop it from entering the vagina.

They are 98% effective in preventing pregnancy

## Pro's

- ◆ Reduces risk of getting or passing on STIs
- ◆ Widely available from pharmacies, vending machines and supermarkets
- ◆ Cheap

## Con's

- ◆ Must be put on before genital contact
- ◆ Can reduce sensitivity for some people



# Female Condoms

## What is it?

The female condom fits inside the female vagina to prevent semen from entering.

## How does it work?

It consists of an inner and outer ring. The inner ring helps to insert the condom. The outer ring remains outside the vagina and sits flat against the labia (vaginal lips). They are 95% effective

## Pro's

- ◆ Reduces risk of getting or passing on STIs
- ◆ Can be brought without prescription
- ◆ Better than male condoms for sensation
- ◆ Can be inserted before sex

## Con's

- ◆ Penis might slip outside condom
- ◆ More expensive and less available than male condoms



## Oral Contraceptive pill ("The Pill")

### What is it?

"The pill" contains the hormones oestrogen and progesterone. There are many types available and they vary in the dose of hormones.

### How does it work?

It prevents the body from releasing an egg every month and makes it hard for a fertilized egg to implant in the uterus. It is 99.5% effective if taken correctly

### Pro's

- ◆ Very effective form of contraception
- ◆ Many types so most women can find one to suit them
- ◆ Can make periods lighter and less painful
- ◆ Can choose when you have your period
- ◆ May relieve premenstrual syndrome

### Con's

- ◆ May get sore breasts
- ◆ May get bleeding between periods
- ◆ May experience nausea
- ◆ Might have mood changes e.g. irritable and depression
- ◆ No protection from STIs



## Progesterone Only Pill ("The mini pill")

### What is it?

This pill only contains progesterone hormone for those who can not tolerate oestrogen.

### How does it work?

Thickens the mucus of the cervix so that sperm cannot fertilize then egg and interferes with ovulation. It is 97-99% effective when taken correctly

### Pro's

- ◆ Effective form of contraception
- ◆ No serious side effects
- ◆ Safe to use while breast feeding
- ◆ Better choice for women over 40 years
- ◆ Can have a baby sooner after stopping

### Con's

- ◆ Need to be taken at the same time daily
- ◆ May change menstrual pattern
- ◆ May increase chance of developing ovarian cysts if there is past history
- ◆ No protection from STIs



# Injectable Hormone Contraception ("Depo")

## What is it?

Depo is a progesterone only contraception injection given into the muscle (arm) every 12 weeks by doctor or nurse.

## How does it work?

It prevents the body from releasing and egg every month, prevents sperm penetration and makes it hard for a fertilized egg to implant itself in the uterus. It is 99% effective.

## Pro's

- ◆ Very effective contraception
- ◆ Can make periods light and less painful
- ◆ Some women don't get periods after 2 injections
- ◆ May relieve premenstrual syndrome
- ◆ Suitable for breastfeeding

## Con's

- ◆ No protection against STIs
- ◆ Once injection is given it cannot be reversed – it has to wear off
- ◆ Regular visits to the doctor - costly
- ◆ May have small weight gain or mood changes





# Contraceptive Implant

## What is it?

The contraceptive rod is a small plastic rod with a progesterone hormone that is inserted under the skin inside the upper arm.

## How does it work?

The hormone is released slowly into the blood over 3 years. It stops the body from releasing an egg every month and stops sperm getting through. It is 99% effective

## Pro's

- ◆ Can be removed at any time
- ◆ Lasts for 3 years
- ◆ Can make periods light
- ◆ Cheap
- ◆ don't have to remember to take daily contraception
- ◆ Not affected by vomiting and diarrhoea

## Con's

- ◆ May experience irregular bleeding
- ◆ May experience weight gain or acne, mood swings, stomach pain and painful periods
- ◆ No protection against STIs



# Vaginal Contraceptive Ring

## What is it?

Vaginal contraceptive ring is a soft plastic ring containing oestrogen and progesterone hormones.

## How does it work?

It is inserted into the vagina to protect against pregnancy. It slowly releases hormones to prevent the release of an egg. It remains in the vagina for 3 weeks then is removed in the 4th and menstruation occurs. It is 99% effective if used correctly.

## Pro's

- ◆ Less likely to experience nausea, sore breasts and in-between bleeding
- ◆ Don't have to remember to take a contraceptive pill every day
- ◆ No risk of pill failure associated with diarrhoea and vomiting

## Con's

- ◆ Increased risk of developing a blood clot in the vein
- ◆ Greater risk of clotting during long flights
- ◆ No protection from STIs





# Emergency Contraception ("Morning after pill")

## What is it?

It is a progesterone type hormone to prevent pregnancy after intercourse has occurred.

## How does it work?

It prevents release of the monthly egg and prevents sperm from reaching the egg.

## Pro's

It is effective in **emergencies** when sexual intercourse either:

- ◆ Without contraception
- ◆ When contraception may have failed
- ◆ When sexual intercourse is forced or sexual assault has occurred

## Con's

- ◆ No protection from STIs
- ◆ Possible side effects:
  - ◆ Breast tenderness and mild headaches (should go in 48 hours)
  - ◆ Nausea
  - ◆ Tiredness (Some might get 'Flu-like' feelings)



# Female sterilization

## What is it?

Female sterilization involves a procedure to block the fallopian tubes.

## How does it work?

The fallopian tubes are blocked so the sperm cannot reach the egg. This prevents fertilization of the egg.



## Pro's

- ◆ Effective permanent contraception
- ◆ doesn't interfere with a your periods
- ◆ Effective immediately after the operation
- ◆ doesn't interfere with sexual drive

## Con's

- ◆ Involves going to hospital and anesthetic
- ◆ May cause discomfort, bruising or infection
- ◆ You need a referral to outpatient hospital or gynecologist
- ◆ No protection from STIs

## Male Sterilization

### What is it?

It is usually done by a vasectomy, which is an operation that cuts the tube that carries the sperm from testes to the penis.

### How does it work?

After a vasectomy the males sperm is no longer in the ejaculate although it appears the same. It is not effective straight after the operation. It may take up to 20 ejaculations for sperm to be cleared from the ejaculate

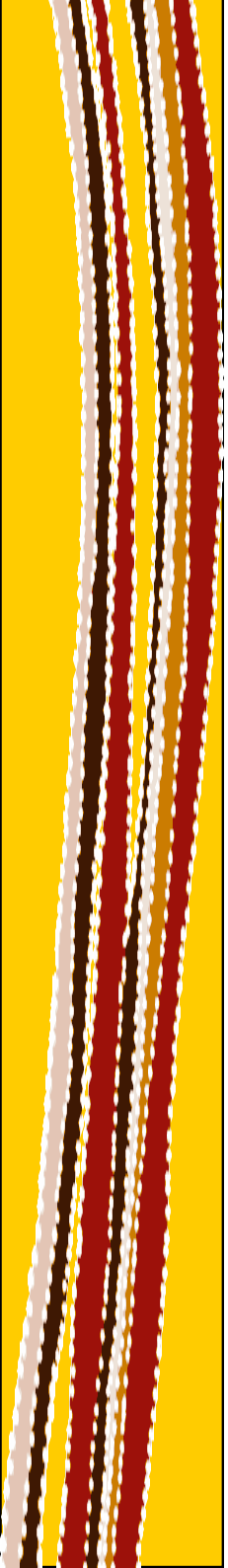
### Pro's

- ◆ More effective than female sterilization
- ◆ Can be done out of hospital
- ◆ You may only need 1-3 days off work
- ◆ Doesn't interfere with sexual drive or performance
- ◆ Doesn't increase a man's risk of future illness (e.g. prostate cancer)

### Con's

- ◆ May cause bruising, discomfort or infection around site of operation
- ◆ Is usually not reversible
- ◆ Can sometimes cause a lump where the tube





*For more information :*  
*See a health worker*  
*or visit the website*  
*[www.fpwa.org.au](http://www.fpwa.org.au)*

