











YOUR ULTIMATE BIRTH CONTROL GUIDE

	TYPE	popular brands	approximate cost*	how to use	effectiveness**	recommended for	not recommended for	risks	possible side effects***	prescription needed?	when are you protected?	active ingredient
	PILL	Ortho Tri-Cyclen, Yaz, Lo/Ovral, Loestrin, TriNessa, Ocella	\$10 to \$50 per month	Oral pills; must be taken daily	98%	Temporary birth control	Smokers, women with a history of cardiovascular problems or breast cancer	Increased risk of blood clots and stroke, risk of heart attack if you have history	Weight gain, bloating, breast tenderness, spotting	YES	Immediately if started on first day of period, otherwise backup is needed for 1 week	Estrogen and different progestins—some pills contain only progestin
	EMERGENCY PILL	Plan B, Next Choice	\$30 to \$60	Oral pill; taken within 72 hours after failed contraception	87%	Women who need a backup to failed contraception	Women who think they may be pregnant, women looking for a routine birth control method	May increase blood sugar levels in women with diabetes	Changes in your period, nausea, lower abdominal pain, fatigue, headache, dizziness, breast tenderness	NO. Must be 17 or older for Plan B, 18 or older for Next Choice	After taking, within allotted 72-hour window	Progestin (levonorgestrel)
	IUD	Mirena, ParaGard	\$200 to \$600 (device and insertion)	Small T-shaped device that is inserted into uterus by professional; monthly self-check for placement; lasts 5-10 years	99%	Women who wish to delay pregnancy by 5 or more years	Women who want short-term protection or have a history of fibroids	Infection, expulsion. ParaGard: Increase in menstrual flow; Mirena: Blood clots and stroke	Cramping after insertion, infection, weight gain, bloating, breast tenderness, spotting	YES	ParaGard: Immediately, Mirena: Immediately if injected during first 7 days after start of period, otherwise backup needed for 1 week	Mirena: progestin (levonorgestrel), ParaGard: copper coil
	RING	NuvaRing	Up to \$50 per month	New plastic ring inserted into vagina monthly, remains in place for 3 weeks, then removed for 1 week (your period)	98%	Women who dislike daily pills	Smokers, women with a history of cardiovascular problems or breast cancer	Increased risk of blood clots and stroke, risk of heart attack if you have history	Vaginal infections, irritation and secretion, headache, weight gain, bloating, breast tenderness, spotting	YES	Immediately if inserted on first day of period, otherwise backup needed for 1 week	Estrogen and progestin (etonogestrel)

*depending on insurance coverage

**when used correctly

***doesn't include all side effects, just the most common ones

TYPE	brand	cost*	how to	effective**	recommended	not recommended	risks	side effects***	Rx?	protection	ingredient
 SHOT	Depo-Provera	\$35 to \$75 plus exam fees	Injection administered by professional into upper arm or butt, lasts up to 4 months	99%	Women who cannot take estrogen or are breast-feeding	Women who want short-term protection	Delay in pregnancy after discontinuing, calcium loss from bones, increased risk of blood clots and stroke, risk of heart attack if you have history	Weight gain, irregular periods, breast tenderness, bloating, nervousness, depression, slowed hair growth	YES	Immediately if injected within first 7 days of period, otherwise backup needed for 1 week	Progestin (medroxy-progesterone acetate)
 PATCH	Ortho Evra	\$15 to \$50 per month	Bandage-like patch applied to skin every 7 days, then removed; each month has 3 weeks of patches, then a week without (for your period).	98%	Women who prefer topical medications or dislike daily pills	Smokers, women with a history of cardiovascular problems or breast cancer	Increased risk of blood clots and stroke, risk of heart attack if you have history	Irritation at the application site, weight gain, bloating, breast tenderness, spotting	YES	Immediately if applied during first 24 hours after start of period, otherwise use backup for 1 week	Estrogen and progestin (norelgestromin)
 IMPLANT	Implanon	\$400 to \$800 (device and insertion)	Matchstick-sized rod implanted under inner-arm skin by professional; lasts up to 3 years	99%	Women who cannot take estrogen or are breast-feeding	Women who want short-term protection	Increased risk of blood clots and stroke, risk of heart attack if you have history, shift of implant in arm	Irregular bleeding (may stop completely), irritation at the application site, weight gain, bloating, breast tenderness, spotting	YES	Immediately if inserted during first 5 days of period, otherwise use backup for 1 week	Progestin (etonogestrel)
 SPONGE	Today Sponge	\$9 to \$15 for 3	Nonhormonal foam disk inserted up to 24 hours before sex; can be left in up to 30 hours total; no doctor fitting required	84–91% for those who have not previously given birth, 68–80% for those who have	Women who dislike daily pills or can't take hormones	Women allergic to spermicides, who have had a recent childbirth, abortion or miscarriage, or have history of toxic shock syndrome	Toxic shock syndrome	Allergy to spermicide, vaginal irritation, may cause sex to be messy or too dry	NO	Immediately and for the next 30 hours—must stay in place at least 6 hours after sex	Spermicide and protective plastic foam barrier
 DIAPHRAGM	Ortho All-Flex, Milex Wide Seal	\$15 to \$50 plus cost for office visit (fitting required by professional) \$7 to \$18 for spermicide	Reusable latex or silicone disk inserted into vagina with spermicide before sex; lasts up to 2 years	92–96%	Women who dislike daily pills or can't take hormones	Women allergic to spermicides, women on their periods	More frequent urinary tract infections, increased risk for toxic shock syndrome, may be dislodged by male partner or in certain sexual positions	Allergy to diaphragm material or spermicide	NO (however, fitting required by doctor)	Immediately after insertion; more spermicide may need to be reapplied—must stay in place at least 6 hours after sex	Spermicide and protective latex or silicone barrier
 CONDOM	Durex, Trojan, Lifestyles	\$2 to \$6 for 3	Latex or lambskin sheath applied to male partner every time before sex; one time use only	98%	Women who have multiple partners or can't take hormones	N/A	None	Irritation if allergic to latex (use lambskin instead)	NO	Immediately	Protective latex or lambskin barrier and sometimes spermicide

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