


The choices	Efficacy & advantages	Main drawbacks
<b>Short-acting contraception</b>		
 <p><b>Combined pills</b> Tablet containing oestrogen and progestogen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 99% effective when used correctly</li> <li>• Useful for young healthy women who can reliably take pills</li> <li>• Works mainly by preventing egg release</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not suitable for women with conditions such as high blood pressure</li> <li>• Not suitable for women over 35 who smoke</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Progestogen-only pills</b> Tablet containing only progestogen Two types available</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 96–99% effective when used correctly</li> <li>• Suitable for women who do not want to or cannot take oestrogen</li> </ul> <p>Two types available:</p> <p><b>Type 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works mainly by preventing egg release</li> <li>• In case of missed pill, can be taken up to 12 hours late</li> </ul> <p><b>Type 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works mainly by preventing sperm entering the womb</li> <li>• In case of missed pill, must be taken within 3 hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many women have changes in menstrual pattern</li> <li>• Does not consistently prevent egg release</li> <li>• Many women have changes in menstrual pattern</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Monthly ring</b> Flexible ring which is placed inside the vagina Contains lowest daily dose of oestrogen and progestogen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 99% effective when used correctly</li> <li>• Only needs to be replaced once a month</li> <li>• No need to remember a daily pill</li> <li>• Not affected by vomiting or diarrhoea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to learn how to insert</li> <li>• Not suitable for women over 35 who smoke</li> <li>• Not suitable for women with conditions such as high blood pressure</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Condoms</b> Barrier method that the man or woman can use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When used correctly, around 98% effective for male condoms and 95% for female condoms</li> <li>• Avoids hormones</li> <li>• Offers protection against sexually transmitted infections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting them on can involve interruption of intercourse</li> <li>• The male condom can split or rupture</li> <li>• The female condom can be pushed aside</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Diaphragms/caps</b> Barrier methods that you fit inside the vagina to cover the cervix</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective in 92–96% of women when used correctly</li> <li>• Useful for those who wish to avoid hormones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involves forward planning or interruption of intercourse</li> <li>• Can be messy as you need to use spermicide as well</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Natural methods</b> Recognising the fertile and infertile times of your cycle to plan when you should avoid intercourse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 94–99% effective with perfect use when intercourse is restricted to the time after ovulation</li> <li>• Avoids devices or hormones</li> <li>• Can be used at all stages of reproductive life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can take up to 6 months to learn effectively</li> <li>• Stress or illness can make the method unreliable</li> <li>• Need to avoid intercourse at certain times of the month and be highly motivated</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Patch</b> Patch containing oestrogen and progestogen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 99% effective when used correctly</li> <li>• Applied once a week for 3 weeks each month</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be seen on the skin</li> <li>• Not suitable for women with conditions such as high blood pressure</li> <li>• Unsuitable for women over 35 who smoke</li> </ul>
<b>Long-acting contraception</b>		
 <p><b>Implants</b> Small flexible rod which is placed just under the skin Contains progestogen only</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 99% effective</li> <li>• Effective and rapidly reversible method of contraception</li> <li>• Lasts up to 3 years</li> <li>• Useful for women who cannot remember their contraceptive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many women have changes in menstrual patterns</li> <li>• Insertion and removal must be performed by trained healthcare professionals</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Progestogen injections</b> Injection containing progestogen Injected into a muscle every 8 or 12 weeks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 99% effective</li> <li>• Useful for women who cannot remember their contraceptive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot be immediately reversed in event of side effects</li> <li>• Many women have changes in menstrual patterns</li> <li>• Can take some time for fertility to return to normal</li> </ul>
 <p><b>IUD (the coil)</b> Intrauterine device that is fitted into the womb</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 98–99% effective</li> <li>• Women who want longer-term contraception or who do not want to take hormones</li> <li>• Useful for women who cannot remember their contraceptive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Periods may become heavier, longer or more painful</li> <li>• Insertion and removal must be performed by trained healthcare professionals</li> </ul>
 <p><b>IUS</b> Intrauterine device that is fitted into the womb Contains progestogen only</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 99% effective</li> <li>• Lasts up to 5 years</li> <li>• Effective and rapidly reversible method of contraception</li> <li>• Useful for women who cannot remember their contraceptive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many women have changes in menstrual patterns</li> <li>• Insertion and removal must be performed by trained healthcare professionals</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Sterilisation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 99% effective</li> <li>• Permanent method of contraception that involves no hormones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot be easily reversed</li> <li>• Involves an operation</li> <li>• Male sterilisation is not effective immediately</li> </ul>



For more information on contraceptive choices visit  
[www.talkchoice.co.uk](http://www.talkchoice.co.uk)

