

# Natural Family Planning (NFP) Methods vs. Contraception

Methods	Possible Side Effects	% Effectiveness Avoiding Pregnancy		Harmful to Future Fertility	Responsible for Use
		Perfect Use †	Typical Use ^		
<b>Natural Family Planning</b>	<b>Only method of FP that can be used to achieve/avoid pregnancy</b>				<b>Fosters Communication</b>
Billings Ovulation Method - mucus based	None	98	90	No	Man and Woman
Creighton Model Fertility Care System - mucus based	None	99.5	96.8	No	Man and Woman
Couple to Couple League (CCL) - symptothermal, mucus & temperature based	None	99.4	98.2	No	Man and Woman
Marquette Model - mucus & electronic fertility monitor based	None	98	93	No	Man and Woman
<b>Barrier Methods*</b>					
Condom	Allergic reaction or irritation.	98	82	No	Man
Diaphragm	Allergic reaction or irritation, Sometimes difficult to remove.	94	88	No	Woman
<b>Vaginal Spermicides*</b>					
Creams, Gels, Suppositories	Allergic reaction or irritation.	82	72	No	Woman
<b>Sterilization Surgeries*</b>					
Tubal Ligation	Surgery may be complicated by bleeding and/or infection. Increased rate: hysterectomy, ectopic pregnancy, painful periods.	99.5	99.5	Yes	Woman
Vasectomy	Surgery may be complicated by bleeding and/or infection. May increase risk of prostate cancer.	99.9	99.8	Yes	Man
<b>Intrauterine Device (IUD) * **</b>					
Affects sperm motility/survival and affects the lining of the uterus and prevents the implantation of the early human life in the uterus; <i>requires replacement every 10 years.</i>	Heavy, irregular or painful menses; painful intercourse; infection; ectopic pregnancy; perforation of the uterus.	99.4	99.2	Possible	Woman
<b>Hormonal Contraception (2 hormones) - Pill, Patch, Vaginal Ring</b>					
<b>*Contraceptive:</b> Suppresses ovulation (the release of an egg). If ovulation occurs, the sperm may be prevented from reaching the egg because of thickened cervical mucus. <b>**Abortifacient:</b> if ovulation occurs (2-29% of cycles) and conception occurs, the hormones act by preventing the implantation of the early human life in the uterus.	<b>Common:</b> breast tenderness/cysts, depression, weight gain, headaches, irregular bleeding. <b>Less Common:</b> increased risk of breast cancer, liver tumors, stroke, heart attack, blood clots, elevated blood pressure.	99.6	91	May Delay	Woman
<b>Hormonal Contraception (1 hormone = Progestin only)</b>					
<b>*Contraceptive and **Abortifacient:</b> works like the combination hormonal contraception, but breakthrough ovulation occurs more frequently					
Implanon (Implant in skin) <i>replacement required every 3 years</i> ; breakthrough ovulation can occur after 30 months (3% between 30-36 months)	Irregular bleeding; acne; weight gain; headaches; depression; vaginal dryness.	99.9	99.9	May Delay	Woman
Mirena (IUD with hormone) <i>replacement required every 5 years</i> ; breakthrough ovulation 45% at 1 year and 75% at 4 years		99.8	99.8	May Delay	Woman
Progestin only Pill (breakthrough ovulation 33-65%)		99.6	91	May Delay	Woman
Depo-Provera ( <i>injection every three months</i> ) breakthrough ovulation can occur but incidence not known	See above; delays return of normal ovarian function by average of 8 months after last shot; decrease in bone density	99.7	99.7	Delays	Woman

**Conception:** union of sperm and egg; the beginning of human life  
**\*Contraceptive:** prevents conception  
**\*\*Abortifacient:** agent that ends human life after conception has occurred

† **Perfect Use:** method taught and practiced correctly  
 ^ **Typical Use:** method taught and/or practiced with some inconsistency

updated 12/2022  
 Credit:  
 Peter Danis, MD, Family Physician, Certified FertilityCare Medical Consultant,  
 Gavin Puthoff, MD, Ob/Gyn, Certified FertilityCare Medical Consultant, 2019