

NORTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Health Quarters

Beverly, Lynn, Haverhill, Reading, and Lawrence:
(978) 927-9824 or (800) 892-0234
www.healthq.org

Women's Services of Greater Lowell

Lowell: (978) 446-0236, www.lchealth.org

SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Citizens for Citizens Family Planning

Fall River: (508) 679-0198, Taunton: (508) 823-6924
www.cfcinc.org/fp

Health Care of Southeastern MA, Inc.

Attleboro, Brockton, Falmouth, Hull, Hyannis, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, New Bedford, Plymouth, and Wareham: (508) 583-3005
www.hcsm.org/drhs/reprohealthsvcs.htm

WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Planned Parenthood League of MA

Springfield: (413) 739-1620 or (800) 258-4448
www.pplm.org

Tapestry Health Systems

Amherst, Athol, Great Barrington, Greenfield, Holyoke, North Adams, Northampton, Pittsfield, Springfield, and Westfield: (413) 586-2016 or (800) 696-7752
www.tapestryhealth.org



To find a family planning program near you call:

- **Family Planning/Sexual Health Helpline:**
(877) MA-SEX-ED (877) 627-3933
www.mariatalks.com

To find other counseling programs and services near you, call:

- **HIV/AIDS/STD Hotline: (800) 235-2331** (English, Spanish) TTY: (617) 437-1672
- **Domestic Violence Hotline: (877) 785-2020**
TTY: (877) 521-2601
- **Rape Crisis Hotline: (800) 841-8371** (English)
(800) 223-5001 (Spanish) TTY: (888) 887-7130

Choosing a Birth Control Method



You can decide if and when to have a baby. If this is not the right time for you to have a baby, there are ways you can prevent pregnancy. The surest way to prevent a pregnancy is to not have sexual intercourse. But if you do have sex, you can use one of the birth control methods described in this brochure. Once you choose a method, it's important to use it the right way, every time. **For more information** about how effective a method is, what kinds of side effects it might have, and how to use it correctly, **ask your doctor, nurse or family planning counselor.** Or call (877) MA SEX ED (877) 627-3933 or visit www.mariatalks.com.

BIRTH CONTROL METHODS

BARRIER METHODS

These methods prevent pregnancy by putting up a block (barrier) that keeps the man's sperm from reaching the woman's egg.



Condoms (for men): A condom is a thin latex or plastic cover that is rolled onto the erect penis before sex to keep sperm from entering the vagina.

You can buy condoms at any drugstore. Health care centers may have free or low cost condoms.*



Female Condoms (for women): The female condom is a plastic pouch with a flexible ring at each

end. The closed end is put into the vagina. The open end stays just outside the vagina. The female condom keeps sperm from entering the vagina. Some drugstores sell female condoms. Health care centers may have free or low cost condoms.*

*Latex and plastic condoms can also prevent HIV and other diseases spread through oral, vaginal and anal sex. "Natural skin condoms" are not recommended for disease prevention.



Diaphragm (for women): The diaphragm is a flexible, round rubber cup that covers the woman's cervix (the opening to the uterus). You put spermicide in the diaphragm and then put it in the vagina before having sex. Spermicide kills sperm. You must leave the diaphragm in for at least 6 hours after sex. A doctor or nurse must examine you to be sure you get the right size diaphragm.



Spermicides (for women):

Spermicides prevent pregnancy by killing sperm. Spermicides come in foams, jellies, creams, sponges and contraceptive film. You must put spermicides into the vagina before sex. You can buy spermicides at any drugstore. Spermicides work best when used with a condom or diaphragm.

CAUTION: Spermicides prevent pregnancy but repeated use may increase your risk of HIV. Spermicides contain a chemical (Nonoxynol-9) that can irritate the skin in or around the vagina. If you want to use spermicides to prevent pregnancy, talk to your doctor or nurse about your HIV risk.

HORMONAL METHODS AND IUDS

These methods use hormones to stop eggs from being released or make it harder for sperm to reach an egg.



Birth Control Pills (for women):

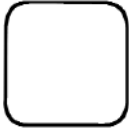
Birth control pills contain hormones that prevent pregnancy. You must take a pill every day. When you get to the end of your pack of pills, your period will start. Soon after, you must start a new pack of pills. You cannot get birth control pills without a prescription from a nurse or doctor.



“The Shot” or “Depo”

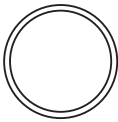
(for women): A doctor or nurse gives you a shot (injection) of a hormone to

prevent pregnancy for 3 months. You must get a shot every three months for this method to keep working.



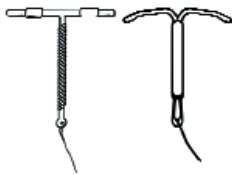
“The Patch” (for women): The patch contains hormones that prevent pregnancy. You stick a patch to your skin and change it once a week for

3 weeks. The 4th week you do not use a patch and your period will start. At the end of the 4th week you put on a new patch, and start the process over again. You cannot get the patch without a prescription from a nurse or doctor.



Vaginal Ring (for women): This clear, flexible ring contains hormones that prevent pregnancy. You put it into your vagina and leave it in for 3 weeks.

On the 4th week you take out the ring and your period will start. At the end of the 4th week you put in a new ring, and start the process over again. You cannot get a vaginal ring without a prescription from a nurse or doctor.



IUD (for women): IUD stands for intrauterine device. An IUD is a small device made of plastic that is put inside a woman’s uterus by a doctor or nurse. There are two

types of IUDs. One contains copper and the other contains a hormone to prevent pregnancy. An IUD may be left in place for 5-10 years, depending on the type.

BEHAVIORAL METHODS

Partners must be able to talk to each other and work together for these methods to work best.

Abstinence (for women and men): Abstinence means not having sexual intercourse at any time. For some people, not having sex is the best way to prevent a pregnancy. Practiced correctly, abstinence is very effective at preventing pregnancy, HIV and other STDs.

Natural Family Planning (for women and men): A doctor or nurse teaches you to keep track of the monthly changes in your menstrual cycle, so that you can understand which days you are most likely to get pregnant. You and your partner can then prevent pregnancy by using a barrier method of birth control or not having sex on the days when you are most likely to get pregnant.

PERMANENT METHODS

*These methods last for the rest of your life. They are for people who are sure they will **never** want to have children in the future.*

Tubal Ligation and Essure® (for women): Tubal ligation (“having your tubes tied”) and Essure® are two different medical procedures for blocking the woman’s fallopian tubes so that eggs cannot meet sperm. Both procedures must be done by a doctor.

Vasectomy (for men): Vasectomy is an operation done by a doctor. The man’s tubes that carry sperm are cut or blocked so that sperm is not released when the man ejaculates (cums) during sex.

TO PREVENT HIV AND OTHER STDs, USE A CONDOM: *Latex or plastic condoms are the only kinds of birth control that are also highly effective in preventing HIV and other STDs. If you use other forms of birth control but also want protection against HIV and other STDs, use a condom in addition to the birth control method you are using.*

EMERGENCY BIRTH CONTROL

Emergency birth control can prevent pregnancy **after sex**, but only if you use it **as soon as possible**—within a couple of days. If you had unprotected sex (sex without using birth control), were forced to have sex, or think your birth control method didn't work, you may be able to use one of these methods to prevent pregnancy.

Emergency Contraceptive (EC) Pills (for women): EC pills are a higher dose of birth control pills that prevent pregnancy. EC is sometimes known as “the morning-after pill” or Plan B®. EC will work up to 5 days (120 hours) after unprotected sex **but** it works best when you take it within the first 12 hours after unprotected sex. Some providers will give you EC pills now if you think you will need them in the future. Don't wait! Take EC pills as soon as possible after unprotected sex.

YOU CAN GET EC PILLS with a prescription from your doctor or clinic, or from the pharmacist at some drug stores, without seeing a doctor first. For more information about where to get EC:

- call your health care provider or family planning clinic
- ask your pharmacist
- go to www.not-2-late.com, or
- call (877) MA-SEX-ED (877) 627-3933.

Emergency IUD insertion (for women):

Within 7 days of unprotected sex, you can have an IUD inserted to prevent pregnancy. A doctor or nurse must insert it.

BIRTH CONTROL AFTER HAVING A BABY

If you have just had a baby or are breastfeeding now, ask your doctor or nurse about which types of birth control you can use so that you don't get pregnant again until you want to.

MASSACHUSETTS FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS PROVIDE THESE SERVICES:

- Birth control information and supplies
- Breast exams, Pap smears and other medical exams
- Pregnancy testing and counseling
- Testing and treatment for STDs
- Information, counseling and testing for HIV
- Emergency contraception (EC)

Massachusetts family planning services are confidential and private for all clients, including teens. You may be able to get services at low cost or no cost to you.

GREATER BOSTON

ABCD/Boston Family Planning

Greater Boston, Quincy, Revere, and Chelsea:
(617) 357-6000 ext. 6251, www.bostonabcd.org

CEOC Cambridge Family Planning

Cambridge and Somerville: (617) 868-2900

CHA Somerville Family Planning

Somerville, Everett, and Revere: (617) 591-6735
www.cha.harvard.edu/services/family_planning.shtml

Planned Parenthood League of MA

Boston: (617) 616-1600 or (800) 258-4448
www.pplm.org

CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS

Great Brook Valley Health Center

Worcester: (508) 852-1805, www.gbvhc.org

Health Awareness Services of Central MA

Marlboro, Milford, and Southbridge: (800) 637-5466
www.hascm.org

Planned Parenthood League of MA

Worcester: (508) 854-3300 or (800) 258-4448
www.pplm.org

Montachusett Opportunity Council

Fitchburg: (978) 345-6272
Gardner: (978) 632-9633
www.mocinc.org/prohealth.htm