

EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTRACEPTION

There are 15 different methods of contraception and all of them are highly effective if they are used correctly. The information below shows the effectiveness rates for different types of contraception if they are used correctly.

However, some methods require users to take action themselves, for example, to remember to take their pill every day, or to use a condom correctly every time they have sex. If the method of contraception is not used correctly it will not be as effective, and the National Institute for Clinical Excellence has calculated that the actual effectiveness rate – that is, the rate based on typical use rather than correct use – of the pill is 92% and for condoms 85%.

Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) methods are more reliable because users do not have to take any action themselves. All these methods – the implant, the injection, the IUS and the IUD – are over 99% effective.

Contraceptives that are more than 99% effective:

Contraceptive injection (renewed every three months).

Contraceptive implant (up to three years).

Intrauterine system, or IUS (up to five years).

Intrauterine device, or IUD, also called the coil (up to five years).

Female sterilisation (permanent).

Male sterilisation (permanent).

Contraceptives that are more than 99% effective if used correctly:

Contraceptive patch (renewed each week for three weeks in every month).

Vaginal ring (renewed each week for three weeks in every month).

Combined pill (taken every day for three weeks out of every month).

Progestogen-only pill (taken every day).

99% effective if used according to teaching instructions:

Natural family planning (operates on a monthly basis).

98% effective if used correctly:

Male condom (every time you have sex).

95% effective if used correctly:

Female condom (every time you have sex).

92-96% effective if used correctly:

Diaphragm with spermicide (every time you have sex).

Cap with spermicide (every time you have sex).

The effectiveness of each method is worked out by calculating how many women get pregnant if 100 women use the method for a year. For example, if a particular contraceptive method is 99% effective, one woman out of every hundred who uses it will get pregnant in a year.