

Short-Acting Reversible Birth Control Methods

This decision aid is to help you and your health care provider talk about methods of birth control and choose what's right for you. Most people can safely use these methods. Your health care provider can tell you whether these methods are safe for you.



	INJECTION	PROGESTIN PILL	COMBINED PILL	PATCH	RING
How is it used?	A health care provider gives you a shot in your arm or buttock	You swallow a small pill	You swallow a small pill	You stick a small, thin patch on your body	You put a flexible, plastic ring in your vagina
How often?	Every 13 weeks	Every day at the same time	Every day at the same time	Every week	Every 4 weeks
How does it work?	Releases progestin	Releases progestin	Releases progestin and estrogen	Releases progestin and estrogen	Releases progestin and estrogen
When does it start working?	Immediately or after 7 days (depends on when you get the first shot)	Immediately or after 2 days (depends on when you start taking the pill)	Immediately or after 7 days (depends on when you start taking the pill)	Immediately or after 7 days (depends on when you start using the patch)	Immediately or after 7 days (depends on when you start using the ring)
How many people become pregnant in the first year?					
Not always following the instructions:	6 in 100 people ●○○○○○○○○○	9 in 100 people ●○○○○○○○○○	9 in 100 people ●○○○○○○○○○	9 in 100 people ●○○○○○○○○○	9 in 100 people ●○○○○○○○○○
Always following the instructions:	Fewer than 1 in 100 people ○○○○○○○○○	Fewer than 1 in 100 people ○○○○○○○○○	Fewer than 1 in 100 people ○○○○○○○○○	Fewer than 1 in 100 people ○○○○○○○○○	Fewer than 1 in 100 people ○○○○○○○○○
What are some of the side effects?					
Unscheduled spotting or bleeding?	Possible	Possible	Possible, usually improves over time	Possible, usually improves over time	Possible, usually improves over time
Heavy or prolonged bleeding?	Possible	Possible			
Fewer or no periods?	Possible	Possible			
Other side effects (e.g., nausea, headaches, breast tenderness)?		Possible	Possible	Possible	Possible
Bone loss?	Possible, usually improves when you stop getting the shot				
Skin irritation?				Possible	
Vaginal irritation or discharge?					Possible
Does it protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs)?	No	No	No	No	No

This decision aid is for use only during a visit with your health care provider. It is not intended to give you medical advice or recommend a birth control method. For more information, including authors, information sources, and terms of use, see www.rightforme.org/decision

Version 1.1

