

Family Planning

Birth spacing

After having a baby, it's important to start thinking about birth spacing. It's recommended to wait 18 months from the birth of one baby to the conception of the next baby to give your body time to recover. Less than 6 months between birth of one baby and conception of the next can increase risk of pregnancy complications like prematurity and low birth weight.

Birth control options

Talk with your doctor/midwife for more info about any of the birth control options below. If you're breastfeeding, birth control containing estrogen may lower your milk supply, so your doctor/midwife will generally recommend using either nonhormonal or progestin-only options. Additionally, note that while your chances of getting pregnant are generally lower while breastfeeding, it's not a guaranteed method of contraception. For more information, please consult your doctor or midwife.

Method	Effectiveness	Frequency of use	Hormones?	Risk of lower milk supply?
Sterilization (male or female)	99.5-99.85%	Once	Nonhormonal	No
Implant	99.9%	Use for up to 3 years	Contains progestin only	No
IUD	99.2-99.6%	Hormonal: Up to 8 yrs. Copper: Up to 10 yrs.	Copper IUD: Nonhormonal Hormonal IUD: Progestin only	No
Injection	96%	Get a shot on time every 3 months	Contains progestin only	No
Pill	93%	Take a pill on time every day	Progestin-only pills available. Combination pills contain estrogen and progestin.	Progestin-only: No Combination: Yes
Patch	93%	Change patch every week	Contains estrogen and progestin	Yes
Vaginal ring	93%	Change ring every month (year long also available)	Contains estrogen and progestin	Yes
Condoms	87%	Use every time you have sex	Nonhormonal	No
Rhythm method	77%	Monitor fertility signs every day	Nonhormonal	No