

Your rights and responsibilities around contraception

These are your rights around contraception:

- Confidential healthcare. This means that your health worker is not allowed to tell other people about what you tell her without your permission.
- Health information, advice and treatment about contraception and your sexual health. You can get this at the clinic.
- Free contraception from your clinic.

These rights go hand in hand with the following responsibilities:

- Look after your sexual health. Abstain for as long as possible. If you decide to have sex, plan for it. Get contraceptives from the clinic before you have sex.
- Learn how to use contraceptives. Your health worker will advise you about this.
- Use your contraceptives correctly, otherwise they won't work.

Where can you get contraceptives?

Visit your clinic.

- Speak to a health worker about starting contraception.
- The health worker will examine you, discuss your options, advise you on the best contraceptives to use, explain how the contraceptives work and give you the contraceptives.

Points to remember about contraception

- You can get pregnant if you have sex without contraception.
- Condoms are the only contraceptives that can prevent both pregnancy and STIs.
- Abstaining from sex is the best way for you to prevent pregnancy and HIV.
- Always use dual protection (two contraceptives):
 - the male or female condom and
 - another contraceptive.
- Use contraceptives to make sure you can continue with your education and plans for the future.
- Always use the contraceptives in the correct way, otherwise they will not give you protection.

Ask for advice and help

If you are planning to have sex, be prepared. Get condoms and another contraceptive from your clinic. If you have any questions, go to the clinic and speak to a health worker. Health workers are there to help you look after your health. Ask them for the advice you need.

loveLife 0800 121 900 or sms 'plz cal me' to 083 323 1023

National AIDS helpline: 0800 012 322

Integrated School Health Programme

Contraception



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The risks of having sex

Deciding to have sex is not a simple matter. If you have sex, there are two risks:

- You can get pregnant.
- You can get a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI).

This is why it's a good idea not to have sex until you are older.

Abstaining from sex

The best way to prevent pregnancy is to abstain from sex. This means not having sex (no contact between the man's penis and the outside and inside of your sexual organs). No sex is also the best protection against STIs, including HIV. If you are abstaining, you can kiss, touch with hands and hug.

Abstaining from sex is the best way to prevent both pregnancy and HIV.



Planning before you have sex

Before you decide to have sex, think carefully about it. Talk to someone you trust, like a peer educator or a trusted friend. If you do decide to have sex, you can prevent pregnancy by using contraceptives. Get contraceptives from your clinic before you have sex.

What are contraceptives and why do you need to know about them?

Contraceptives stop you from getting pregnant. This means that you can decide when you are ready to have a baby. Some contraceptives also prevent STIs from spreading between people who are having sex.

How do contraceptives help you to reach your goals for the future?

- They prevent pregnancy and disease.
- They allow you to complete your education.
- They let you plan well for the future.

Different types of contraceptives and how they work

Women have hormones that cause them to release an egg every month. When you start having your periods, your body is releasing these eggs. When a male's sperm fertilises the egg, a woman gets pregnant. Contraceptives work in different ways to prevent a woman from getting pregnant.

There are different types of contraceptives:

The male condom

- A man rolls a condom onto his penis and keeps it on during sex.
- It stops the sperm from going into a woman and fertilising the egg.
- You can only use it once.



The female condom

- A woman places the condom in her vagina before sex and that stops the sperm from entering her and fertilising the egg.
- You can only use it once.



The sub-dermal implant

- This is a very small tube that is inserted into a woman's upper arm by a doctor.
- It stops a woman's ovaries from releasing an egg every month. Without an egg for the sperm to fertilise, there can't be a pregnancy.
- It is very convenient because it prevents pregnancy for up to three years.



Male and female condoms prevent STIs as well as pregnancy.

The pill

- The pill stops a woman's ovaries from releasing an egg every month.
- If you use the pill, you have to take it every day, because if you miss even one day, you can get pregnant.



The contraceptive injection

This injection stops a woman's ovaries from releasing an egg every month. It lasts for eight to twelve weeks.



The 'morning-after' pill

- The morning-after pill is used in emergencies, after unprotected sex or rape.
- You need to use it within three days (72 hours).
- It works by stopping the sperm from fertilising the woman's egg.



Dual protection

When you decide to have sex, use dual protection. This means using a condom – male or female – plus another type of contraceptive.

A person who is having sex needs to be very responsible. Not only can you get STIs from sex; you can also get pregnant.