



Family Planning Options

What is contraception?

Contraception, which is a fancy way to say birth control, is a term used for methods to prevent pregnancy. There are many different ways to prevent pregnancy when sexually active so it is possible to pick something that best suits you and your family. Options include condoms, sponges, pills, patches, implants, intrauterine devices, sterilization, and more. Now is a great time to start thinking about which option is right for you!

Which birth control option is best for me?

Only you can decide that; but, some things to think about are if you want another child in the future, how often you would like to use the method, how effective the method is at preventing pregnancy, and cost/convenience. This hand out will briefly go over each of the options listed on the next page so that you can have an idea of what you're interested in based on what is most important to you. You will have an opportunity to discuss your preferences with your provider at your 2 week follow-up appointment.

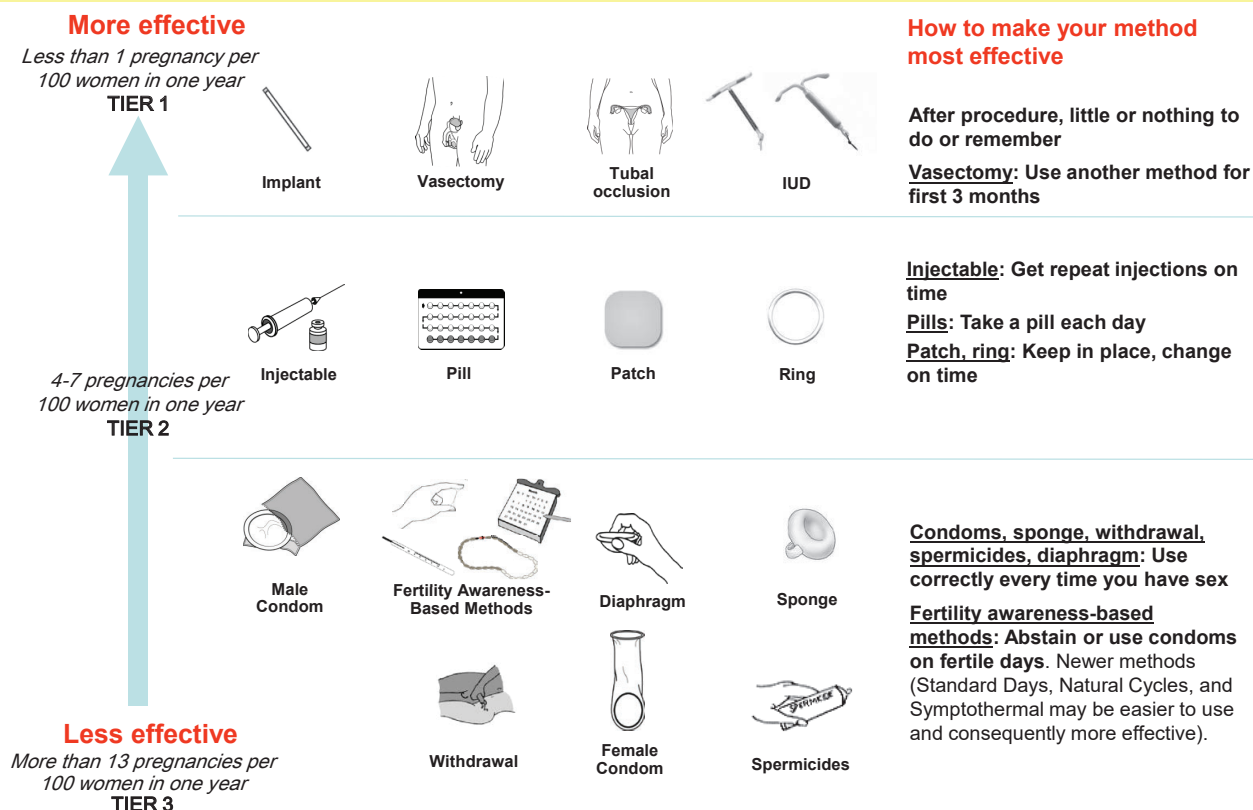
Estes Park Health Services

- Physician Clinic
- Outpatient Services
- Urgent Care Center
- Emergency Department
- Ambulance/EMS
- Level IV Trauma Center
- General Surgery
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Medical/Surgical Unit
- Swing Bed Care

Birth Center

- Diagnostic Imaging
- Laboratory Services
- Rehabilitation Services
- Home Health Services
- Hospice Care
- Living Center/Skilled Nursing

Figure 3-1 Comparing typical effectiveness of contraceptive methods



So I looked at the diagram. Could you tell me a little more?

Below is a basic description of each of the options from the diagram, starting from most effective to least effective. The percentages indicate the number out of every 100 women who do not get pregnant within the first year of use. Remember, this is a very basic guide. You and your provider can have a more in-depth conversation about what is best for you.

Most effective – Permanent

- **Sterilization (Male: 99.85%, Female: 99.5% effective)** Vasectomy (being “snipped”) and tubal ligation (having your “tubes tied”) is a permanent method of birth control with an extremely high success rate. Once done, you do not have to remember to do anything else to prevent pregnancy.

Most effective – Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC)

- **Intrauterine device (IUD) (Hormone: 99.8%, Copper: 99.2% effective)** An IUD can be placed in the uterus to prevent fertilization of the egg. Once placed, there is nothing else to remember to prevent pregnancy. Should you decide to have another child, you can have the IUD removed and you will return to fertility immediately.

- **Implant (99.95% effective)** A small rod is placed under the skin that slowly releases a hormone to prevent ovulation. Once placed, there is nothing else to remember to prevent pregnancy. As with the IUD, the implant can be removed and you will return to fertility immediately.

Moderately effective – Reversible

- **Injectable (94% effective)** You can get a shot every 3 months. If you decide you want another child, there is a delay of 3 months on average to return to fertility. Using this for longer than 2 years is generally not recommended if other forms of birth control are feasible.

- **Pill (91% effective)** You take a pill every day. Immediately reversible.

- **Patch (91% effective)** You put on a patch once a week for 3 weeks then leave it off for 1 week and repeat. Immediately reversible.

- **Vaginal ring (91% effective)** You insert a ring into the vagina and leave it for 3 weeks then remove it for 1 week and repeat. Immediately reversible.

- **Diaphragm (88% effective)** You must insert this correctly over the cervix every time you have sex.

Least effective – Reversible

- **Male condom (82% effective)** Must be correctly placed on the penis every time you have sex.

- **Female condom (79% effective)** Must be correctly placed in the vagina every time you have sex.

- **Withdrawal (78% effective)** Must remove the penis prior to ejaculation and pre-ejaculation.

- **Sponge (76% effective)** Must be correctly placed every time you have sex.

- **Fertility-based Awareness (76% effective)** This is abstaining from sex or using condoms only on the most fertile days of the month.

- **Spermicide (72% effective)** Must correctly use each time you have sex.

Wow, that’s a lot of options!

There are definitely quite a few options but that gives you the power to choose what is best for you and your family. If anything caught your eye, be sure to discuss it with your provider in more detail before you leave.

We here at Estes Park Health value you and your family's health and hope this was helpful in choosing the right birth control option. Should you have any questions or concerns, always feel free to ask!