

I can! choose the birth control best for me

In Illinois, anyone 12+ can get birth control and STI testing on their own. Ask your provider to help you find the method that's right for you.

Hormonal Methods

	 PILL	 PATCH	 RING	 SHOT	 PROGESTIN IUD	 IMPLANT
THICKENS CERVICAL MUCUS & PREVENTS OVULATION	91% effective	91% effective	91% effective	94% effective	99% effective	99+% effective
FREQUENCY	At the same time daily	Weekly for 3 weeks. No patch 4th week	Wear three weeks, remove 4th week	Every three months	Every 3-7 years	Every five years
USE	Take daily by mouth, Rx required	Apply on the back, butt, belly. Rx required.	Insert anywhere in the vagina (like a tampon), Rx required.	Injection into arm, butt, belly usually by a provider.	Inserted into uterus via the cervix by a provider.	Inserted under skin in upper arm by provider.
HORMONES	Combined (estrogen + progestin or progestin only)	Estrogen + progestin	Estrogen + progestin	Progestin	Progestin	Progestin
THE PROS	Reduced PMS, cramps, bleeding & acne. Lowers risk of repro cancers.	Reduced PMS, cramps, bleeding & acne. Lowers risk of repro cancers.	Reduced PMS, cramps, bleeding & acne. Lowers risk of repro cancers.	Reduced or no bleeding after several months.	Treatment for heavy, painful bleeding. Reduced or no bleeding after several months.	Reduced or no bleeding after several months.
THE CONS	Nausea, breast soreness early on.	Nausea, breast soreness early on. One color- beige.	Nausea, breast soreness early on, store in fridge if >3 months.	May change appetite. Irregular bleeding and spotting early on.	Increased vaginal discharge. Insertion may cause heavy cramps	Unpredictable spotting more common, mild pain with insertion.
OTHER INFO	Progestin only pills for those that cannot take estrogen.	Hormones secreted through sticky band-aid, may irritate skin.	Monthly and yearly rings. Can remove with sex but < 3 hours daily.	Longer time to return to baseline fertility.	Effective as EC within 5 days of unprotected sex.	Not visible to others but you can feel it.

Non-Hormonal Methods

	 EXTERNAL CONDOM	 INTERNAL CONDOM	 WITHDRAWAL	 FERTILITY AWARENESS	 DIAPHRAGM, CAP, SPONGE	 COPPER IUD
PREVENTS SPERM FROM SWIMMING TO AN EGG	85% effective	79% effective	78% effective	76-88% effective	71-88% effective	99+% effective
FREQUENCY	Every time you have sex	Every time you have sex	Every time you have sex	Daily via tracking app or calendar	Every time you have sex, during and for a few hours after	Every twelve years
USE	Rolled onto an erect penis	Inserted into the vagina or anus	Remove penis before ejaculating	Daily tracking of temperature, vaginal mucus, and periods	Inserted into vagina to cover the cervix	Inserted into uterus via cervix by a provider
THE PROS	ONLY method that prevents HIV/STIs. Pair w/another method for dual protection.	ONLY method that prevents HIV/STIs. Pair w/another method for dual protection.	Doesn't affect your cycles. Available anytime with cooperative partner.	Doesn't affect your cycles. Good for tracking ovulation if trying to get pregnant.	Doesn't affect your cycles and can be used for many years without replacing.	Doesn't affect your cycles, lowers risk of repro cancers. Effective as EC within 5 days.
THE CONS	Requires careful removal after each use. Add lube to avoid tears.	Requires careful removal after each use. Add lube to avoid tears.	Requires control to ejaculate outside of, away from vagina	Must have regular cycles. No sex (or use a condom) during most fertile days.	Must be used with spermicide foam or gel which may irritate the vagina.	May increase cramps and bleeding. Effective as EC within 5 days of unprotected sex.

NEW METHOD ALERT! Ask your provider about Phexxi -hormone-free, vaginal gel suppository inserted each time with sex to stop sperm movement.

Permanent Methods

VASECTOMY: 99+% EFFECTIVE



Non-scalpel procedure done at a clinic to cut the vas deferens, no sutures needed. Normal non-sperm ejaculations several months after procedure. Requires local numbing medicine and up to 2 days for recovery.

TUBAL LIGATION: 99+% EFFECTIVE



Surgical procedure via belly button w/2 small incisions, done at a hospital to cut or remove fallopian tubes. Requires anesthesia and up to 2 weeks for recovery.

Emergency Contraception

THE MORNING AFTER PILL



Two types: 1) Plan B (comes in many names) is available without Rx for any age. 2) Ella requires Rx and is best if >155 lbs. May cause nausea & irregular period. Take ASAP within 5 days after unprotected sex.

THE IUD



Copper or progestin IUDs are more effective than EC pills. Insertion should be ASAP within five days of unprotected sex. Provides birth control for 7- 12 years after use as EC.