



# **Your body, your choice:**

a basic guide  
to contraception



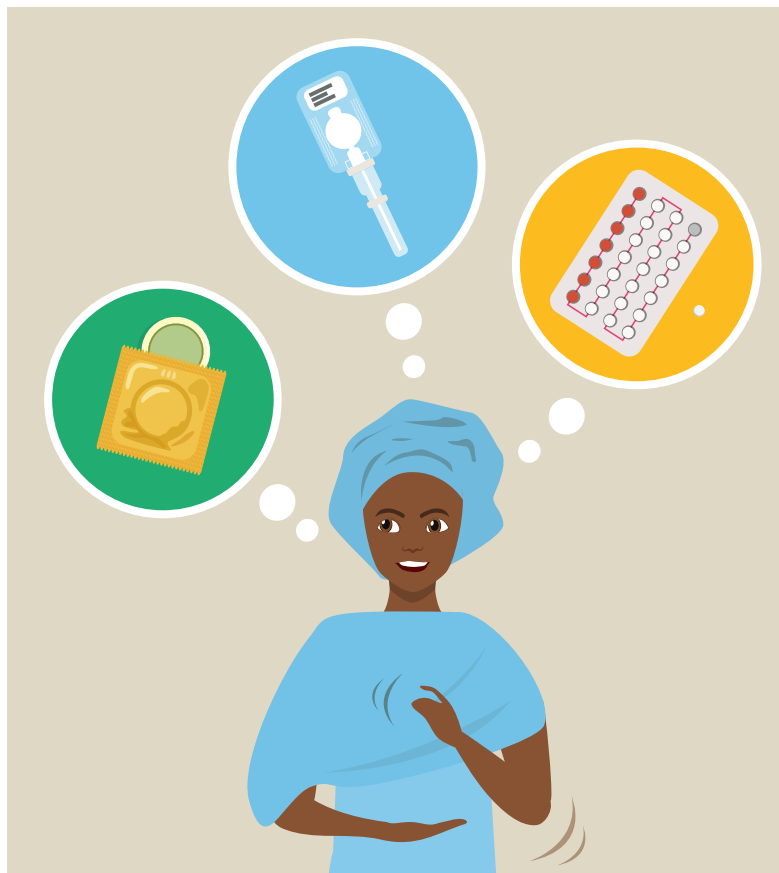
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# Introduction

This booklet contains useful, basic information about different contraceptive methods and where you can get them.


Much more detailed information and advice can be found at health facilities which display the green dot logo. All green dot logo facilities are accessible, inclusive and welcoming for people with disabilities, with health professionals who are specially trained to attend to you. They will help you make an informed decision about the best contraceptive for you.



# Condoms (male and female)

A thin latex sheath which is placed over the penis or inside the vagina just before intercourse.



**Does it protect against STIs?** Yes. 

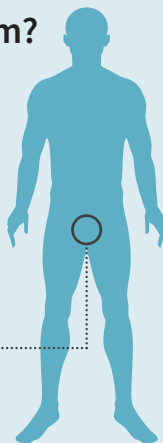
## How do I get it?

You can obtain both male and female condoms from any pharmacy.

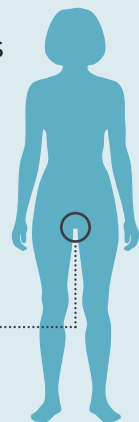
**PHARMACY**

## How do I use them?

The male condom is placed over an erect penis.



One end of the female condom sits inside the vagina and the other end stays outside.



## How often do I need to use it?

**Every time you have sex.**  
Condoms are only effective while you use them during intercourse.



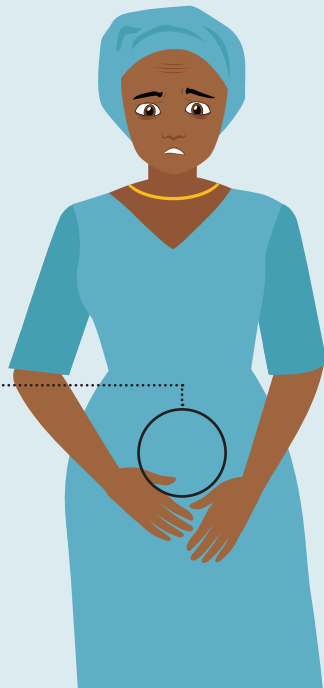
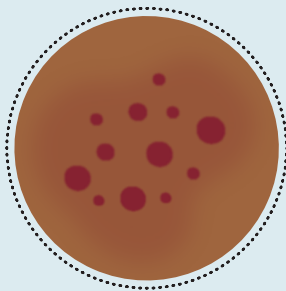
## After I stop using them, how long until I am fertile again?

**Immediately.** Condoms do not affect male or female fertility in any way.



## Possible side effects:

Women with certain disabilities are more allergic to latex than the general population.



# Oral contraceptive pill

A daily tablet which is taken by mouth.  
Some women may also take 'the pill'  
to make their periods easier to manage.

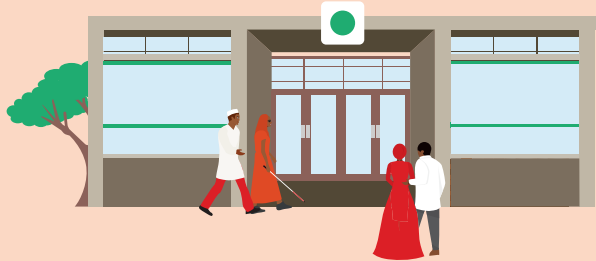


**Does it protect against STIs?** No.



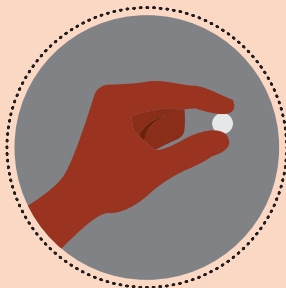
## How do I get it?

A green dot logo  
healthcare facility  
will provide  
a prescription.



## How do I use it?

One pill is taken orally  
at the same time  
every day.



## How often do I need to take it?

**Every day.** It is only effective if taken daily.



## After I stop using it, how long until I am fertile again?

**Immediately.** Fertility is restored right after use of the pill has stopped.



## Possible side effects:

**Nausea and dizziness.** Other possible side effects include: weight gain, breast sensitivity, no periods or slightly irregular bleeds. Women with certain disabilities may have an increased risk of blood clots.



# Injectables

A contraceptive which is injected by a healthcare professional every 8-13 weeks.



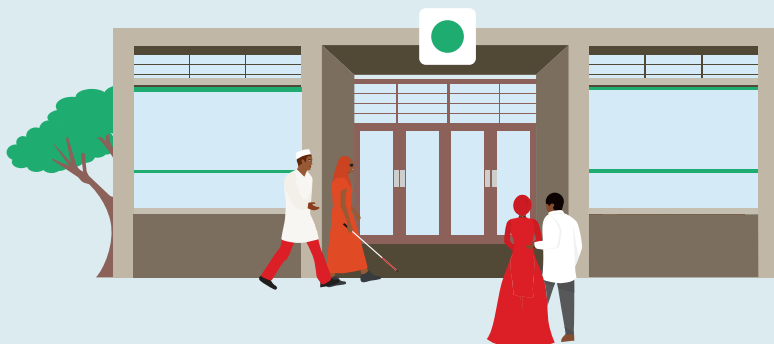
**Does it protect against STIs?**

No.



**How do I get it?**

At a green dot logo healthcare facility.



**How often do I need to do it?**

Every 8-13 weeks depending on the type





## After I stop using it, how long until I am fertile again?

Not immediately. Fertility returns  
around **3-6 months**  
after injections stop.



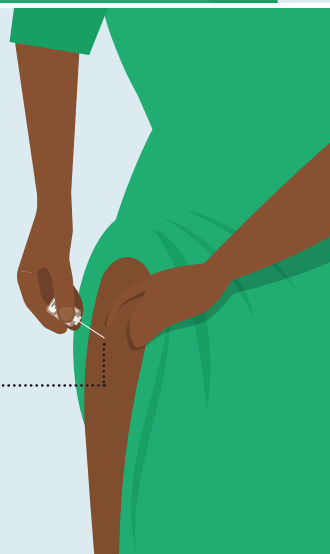
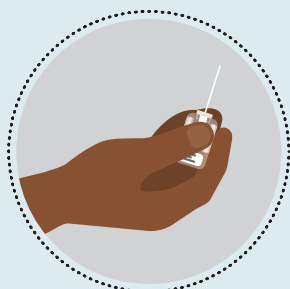
## Possible side effects:

**Nausea and dizziness, slight irregular bleeding, weight gain.** For some women, may weaken bones.



## Can I inject it myself?

**Yes,** you can choose to administer it yourself at home at the recommended frequency.



# Intrauterine device (IUD)

A small plastic T-shaped device which is placed inside a woman's uterus by a healthcare professional.

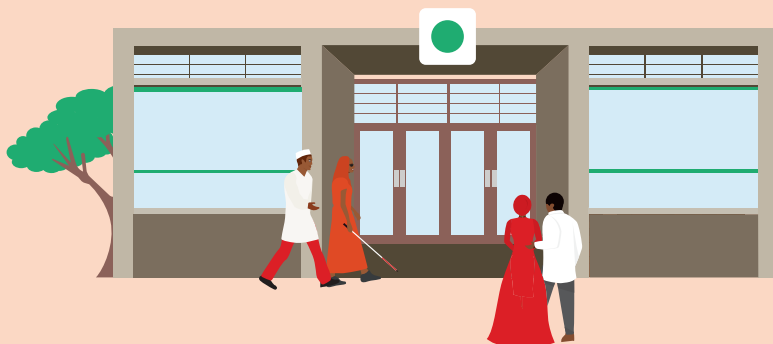


Does it protect against STIs? No.



## How do I get it?

At a green dot logo healthcare facility.



## How often do I need to replace it?

The IUD remains in place and is effective for **up to 10 years**.



## After I stop using it, how long until I am fertile again?

**Immediately.** Fertility returns as soon as the IUD has been removed by a healthcare professional.



## Possible side effects:

**Nausea and dizziness, weight gain, slight irregular bleeding.**

Generally very safe but there is a low risk of damage to the uterus which, in rare cases, can later lead to ectopic pregnancy. Women with spinal cord injury, lupus and some other disabilities may be advised against IUDs.



# Implant

A small plastic rod, inserted under the arm by a healthcare professional, which releases a hormone that prevents pregnancy.



**Does it protect against STIs?** No.



## How do I get it?

At a green dot logo healthcare facility.



## How often do I need to replace it?

The implant remains in place and is effective for **3-5 years**.



## After I stop using it, how long until I am fertile again?

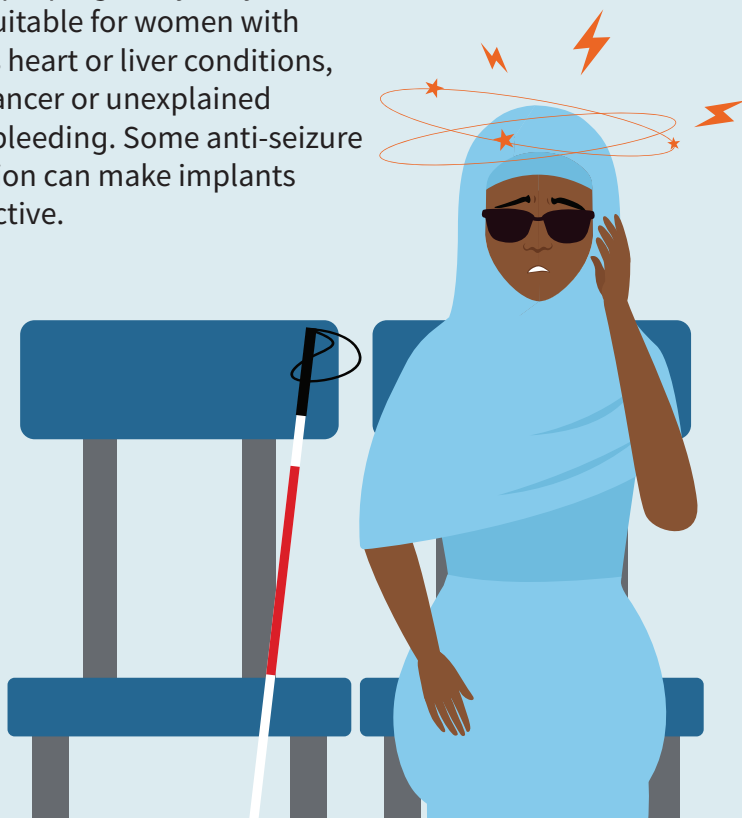
**Immediately.** Fertility returns after removal by a healthcare professional.



## Possible side effects:

**Nausea and dizziness, slight irregular bleeding, weight gain.**

Very rare and more serious possible risks include blood clots and ectopic pregnancy. May not be suitable for women with previous heart or liver conditions, breast cancer or unexplained vaginal bleeding. Some anti-seizure medication can make implants less effective.



# Tubal ligation (women) and vasectomy (men)

Surgical methods of contraception  
which are permanent and irreversible.



Does it protect against STIs? No.



## How do I get them?

Both procedures are performed by a doctor  
at a green dot logo healthcare facility.



## How often do I need to do it?

It is a **one-off** surgical procedure.



## How do they work?

**Tubal ligation** is when a woman's fallopian tubes are clipped and sealed.

**Vasectomy** stops sperm being ejaculated from the penis during sex. Both require surgery, and are permanent and irreversible methods of contraception.



## Possible side effects:

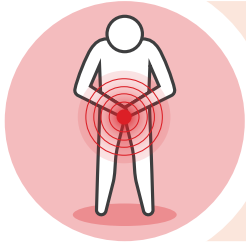
Following a short recovery period, **neither procedure presents any side effects.**

## Are they reversible?

**No.**

# Sexually-transmitted infections (STIs)

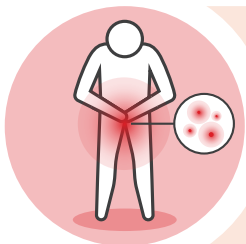
STIs are infections passed from one person to another during any form of sexual intercourse. Some common symptoms include:



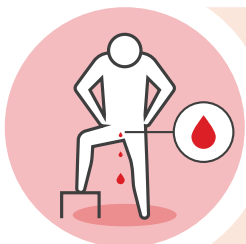
A burning sensation, pain or itchiness in your private parts.



An unusual discharge or smell from your private parts.



Small painful blisters or a rash on or in your private parts.



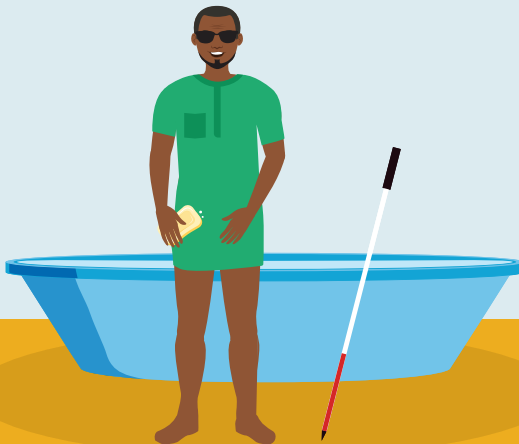
Bleeding after sex.



## Ways to check yourself for STIs at home if you have a disability.

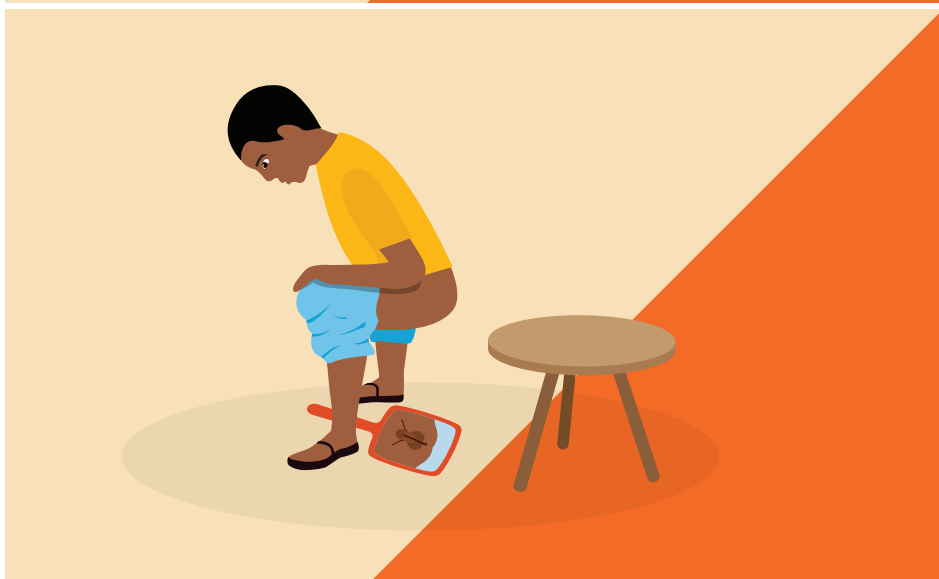
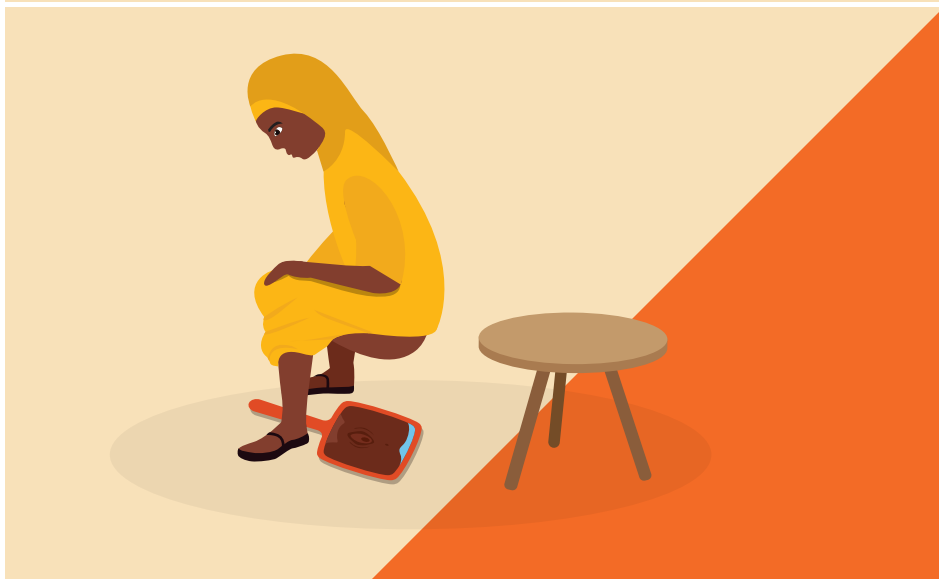
### If you are blind:

When you wash your genitals, use your fingers to feel for any unusual discharge, lumps or soreness. Do this once a week. If you do it every day, it will be difficult for you to notice any changes.



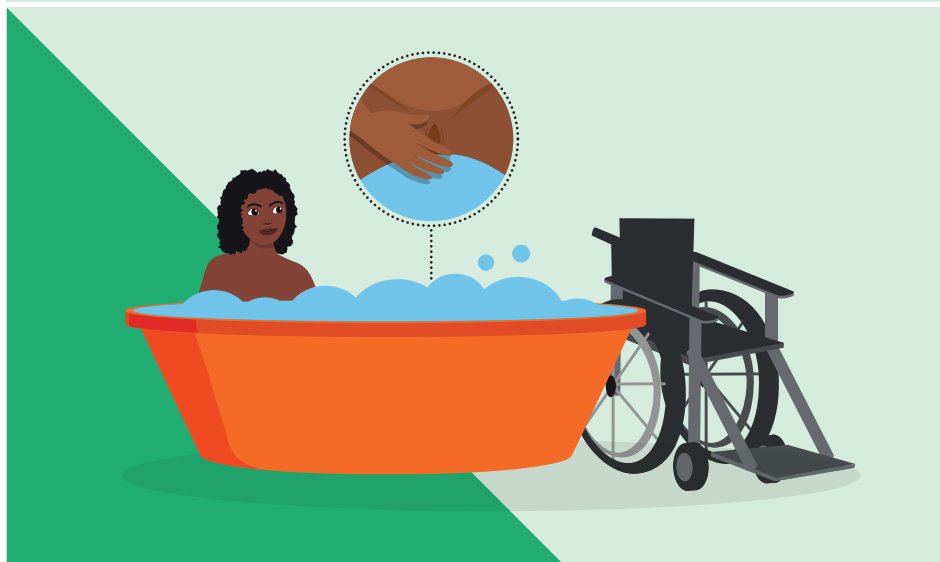
## If you have little or no hand control:

If you are unable to use your fingers to feel your genitals for any changes, try to use a mirror to look for them instead. If you cannot hold the mirror, put it on the floor and crouch over it.



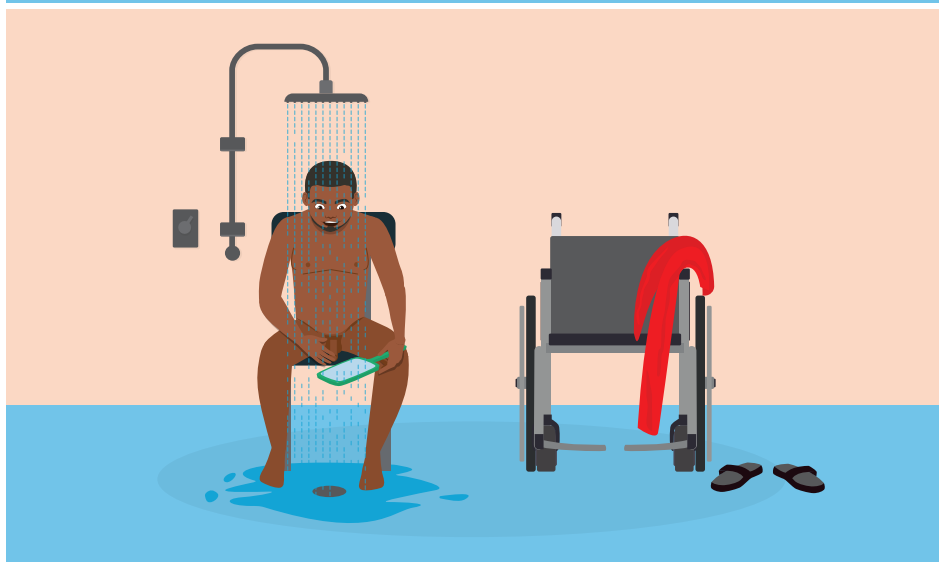
## **If you have a spinal cord injury:**

If you can feel and look at your genitals, do this once a week while you bathe. If you are unable to do this yourself, ask someone you trust to help you. You will probably not be able to feel if there is any pain in your belly or itching in your genitals.



## If you have limited or no movement in your legs:

If possible, find a position in which you can either feel your genitals with your fingers while you wash, or use a mirror to look at them. If necessary, ask someone you trust to hold your legs steady.



If you have any of these symptoms, visit a healthcare facility displaying a green dot logo as soon as possible. Staff there will provide the right treatment for you in a discreet manner. Early treatment will protect you from more serious problems later on.



# Where can I find out more?



For advice and access to the right method for you, visit a healthcare centre displaying the green dot logo. Staff here are fully trained to give advice and information on contraceptive methods that are accessible and disability-inclusive.





The decision  
**is mine.**



**Inclusive  
Futures**

