



PRIMARY CARE
WOMEN'S HEALTH FORUM

THIS RESOURCE IS INTENDED FOR UK HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS ONLY

10 TOP TIPS

Things you might not know about contraception

This resource has been produced by PCWHF consensus. Remember that these are guidelines and to please use your clinical judgement on a case-by-case basis. Reviewed by Dr Silvia Moens-Lecumberri: June 2023. Next review date: June 2026

10 top tips: Things you might not know about contraception

1.

Withdrawal is not “being careful” – studies have shown 22%¹ couples choosing this method are pregnant after a year.

2.

Condoms are fantastic at preventing infection but not so good as preventing pregnancy – 18% of couples starting off with this method are pregnant after a year and if that is not what you want think again.

3.

Emergency hormonal contraception is not a guarantee – Although the risk of unplanned pregnancy is reduced, there remains a risk which depends upon the timing of ovulation.

4.

A copper IUD is virtually 100% effective in preventing unintended pregnancy if fitted in the appropriate time interval after unprotected intercourse.

5.

The only method of contraception that has evidence of weight gain associated with its use is the injection – pills patches rings and coils do not.

6.

A 7-day gap between pills patches and rings may be too long for 1/50 women already so don't stretch it.

7.

Long acting methods mean that you do not have to worry about forgetting – but you do not lose control as very importantly they are reversible and are known as LARCs.

8.

If you have a baby and do not breast feed, you can produce the first egg at within a month so could be pregnant at your postnatal check – talk about contraception before then.

9.

You have a period if an egg is not fertilised. You therefore cannot rely on not having a period to assume that you could not be pregnant. This might apply when weaning, after the injection, after cancer treatment and in various other situations.

10.

More than 20 women older than 50 have a termination each year in England alone. Remember that contraception is needed for at least one year after the menopause if >50yo or 2 years if <50yo.

REFERENCE 1. <https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/contraception-assessment/backgroundinformation/comparative-effectiveness-of-contraceptive-methods/>

For more resources visit: www.pcwhf.co.uk

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