



Guide to Birth Control

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This package was created by Healthy U: Peer Health & Wellness at the University of Manitoba. We are a group of trained, non-judgmental, and confidential student health and wellness leaders on campus.

We provide outreach activities, workshops, and one-on-one support for our fellow students on a variety of health and well-being topics. Feel free to drop in to chat or pick up more information packages.

If you would like to request or attend one of our workshops or events, check out our website for details.



Why should I use birth control?

Whether or not you use birth control is entirely your decision. Just make sure that you and your partner are clear with each other about your choices, so you both know what risks are involved.

Birth control can have many benefits, including:

- A much lower chance of unwanted pregnancy.
- Improved sex since you aren't preoccupied with worry.
- Lighter, less painful, and more regular periods (with certain methods).
- Lower risk of STI's (ONLY with condoms or abstinence).

Using birth control and STI prevention is a form of self-care. If you want to participate in sexual activity but are not ready for pregnancy, help yourself out by taking efforts to avoid it!

Using birth control can improve your sense of body autonomy, meaning you feel like you are more in charge of your own body. There are many methods to choose from that can affect your body in different ways - along with your doctor, you get to decide what might benefit you the most.

What are my options?

Hormonal

IUS (Jaydess, Mirena, or Kyleena)
The pill or the mini-pill
The shot (Depo-Provera)
The ring (Nuva Ring)
The patch



Hormonal birth control is the most effective type when used correctly. Some people experience side effects, but it can also help make your periods less heavy and painful.

Non-hormonal

Condoms (male or female)
Diaphragm
Sponge
Cervical Cap
Spermicide



Non-hormonal methods have no side effects (unless you have an allergy to latex or spermicide). For these methods to work, you need to use it every single time you have sex, and for the entire time. They are less effective than hormonal methods, and are best used when combined with something else (i.e. condoms and spermicide, condoms and the pill, etc.).

Natural

Abstinence
Withdrawal
Fertility Awareness Method



Natural methods have no side effects and are safe for everyone. Withdrawal and Fertility Awareness are much less reliable than other methods, and require a lot of planning and self-control. While abstinence is the most effective way of avoiding pregnancy and STI's, it can be very hard to maintain for some people.

For more information on any of these methods, ask a Healthy U member!

Questions to Consider

	Yes	No	Maybe
Am I comfortable with hormonal methods?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do I have a good memory?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do I have insurance?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do I want something I would have to use during sexual activity?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do I want something easy to hide?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do I get very heavy periods or bad cramps?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do I want something to reduce cramps?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Would not getting my period (due to birth control) make me nervous?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Bring this list with you to your appointment - sometimes we get nervous when talking to the doctor and forget to talk about our own values and priorities. This tool can help you sort out what's important to you.

Online Tools

Bedsider.org is a really helpful website when it comes to birth control. It allows you to explore different methods, and to compare them side by side, looking at the features that matter to you.

Sexandu.ca is another great website for information.

Spot On is a free app from Planned Parenthood that will give you birth control reminders and will also provide you with instructions on what to do if you miss a dose. To download, visit: plannedparenthood.org/get-care/spot-on-period-tracker.

Where to get it

Healthy U: 474 UMSU University Centre (free condoms)*

Website: <http://umanitoba.ca/student-supports/health-wellness>

University Health Service: 104 UMSU University Centre (physicians can give prescriptions)*

Website: <http://umanitoba.ca/student-supports/health-wellness/university-health-service>

Women's Health Clinic: 204-947-1517 (free or lower priced birth control)

Website: <https://womenshealthclinic.org/>

*There are no in-person services at the University of Manitoba currently. Check the relevant websites for remote services and updates.

Do I qualify for coverage?

UMSU's Student Health and Dental Insurance plan covers 70-80% of most prescription medications, and Manitoba Pharmacare may add up to 100%. To find out if your birth control will be covered by the student plan, contact: (204) 474-6666 or 1 855 535-3282, Mon. - Fri. from 9 am to 5 pm (or stop by the Member Services office on the first floor of UMSU University Centre, near the cafeteria).

As of 2019, UMSU-insured birth control options include:

- Most brands of the **birth control pill** (oral contraceptives).
- The birth control **injection** (Depo-Provera).
- Hormonal intrauterine system (IUS): **Mirena, Jaydess. and Kyleena**. However, it still costs approximately \$100 after insurance coverage (remember that this one-time fee will last you 3-5 years).

Currently, **the birth control patch** and **copper IUDs** are not covered by UMSU insurance.

Many birth control methods are covered by private insurance companies, as well as EIA/Social Assistance and FNIHB First Nations Status.

Birth control options map

This guide serves as a tool to help you know what to ask your doctor about, and does not make medical recommendations. Make sure you ask your doctor about what would work best for you. Some medical issues, conditions, or medications change what options are available for you.

