



Guide to Birth Control

Why should I use it?
Things to consider
Insurance coverage
Resources
Options map

This package was created by the Healthy U program at the University of Manitoba. Healthy U is a UM student group made up of a team of friendly volunteers who are trained student health educators.

We provide students with validated health information through our health packages and outreach events, online resources, and one-on-one support. Health topics that we provide resources on include mental health, sexual health, physical health, substance use, social and cultural wellness, and finding a balance.

Please reach out to us if you have any questions at:
healthyu@umanitoba.ca



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 can be 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 (internal or external)
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.).

Lifestyle

Abstinence
Withdrawal
Fertility Awareness Method



Lifestyle 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.

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.

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).

Ask your health care provider for a pill that is typically covered by insurance. You will then ask your pharmacy to run it through insurance for an estimate. You may be asked to contact UMSU insurance or BlueCross directly.

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

UM Resources

Birth Control

University Health Services (UHS)

UHS has health care providers that can give birth control prescriptions.

100 UMSU University Centre

204-474-8411

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

Health and Wellness

The Health and Wellness Educator is a Registered Psychiatric Nurse and available to talk about health and wellness topics.

469 UMSU University Centre (within the SCC)

204-295-9032

healthandwellness@umanitoba.ca

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

Healthy U

Healthy U can provide students with information about birth control and has free condoms and dental dams.

<https://www.healthyuofm.com/>

Women's Centre

The Women's Centre offers condoms, pregnancy tests, and free menstrual products.

190 Helen Glass Centre

womensrep@umsu.ca

<https://umsu.ca/student-clubs-associations/student-clubs/womens-centre/>

Off Campus Resources

Birth Control

Winnipeg

Women's Health Clinic (WHC)

WHC offers resources for birth control, pregnancy options, STIs, safer sex, and relationships. WHC can prescribe birth control and they offer reduced cost birth control.

419 Graham Avenue, Unit A

204-947-1517

whc@womenshealthclinic.org

<https://womenshealthclinic.org/what-we-do/counselling/birth-control-and-pregnancy-counselling/>

Sexuality Education Resource Centre (SERC)

SERC offers online resources for birth control, pregnancy options, STIs, safer sex, and relationships. *Birth control supplies are available in this building through Klinik.*

204-982-7800

info@serc.mb.ca

<https://serc.mb.ca/sexual-health-info/pregnancy-birth-control/birth-control-supplies/>

Family Doctor Finder

Connecting with a family physician can allow you to engage in discussion and explore various methods of birth control to determine what might be right for you. If you don't have a family physician, you can contact Family Doctor Finder to become connected to one in your area.

204-786-7111

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/familydoctorfinder/>

Online

Bedsider.org

Bedsider allows you to explore different methods compare them side by side, looking at the features that matter to you.

<https://www.bedsider.org/>

Sex & U

Sex & U has information on sexual health topics including sexual activity, 2SLGBTQIA+ identities, STIs, contraception, pregnancy, and consent.

<https://www.sexandu.ca/>

Planned Parenthood

Planned Parenthood lets you explore 18 different methods of birth control comparing and including cost, effectiveness, usage, benefits, and disadvantages.

<https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/birth-control>

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.

Start here!

How do you feel about using something that involves hormones?

Sure

How's your memory?

Sharp!

The pill or the mini-pill

No thanks!

Not sure

Not the best

I already forgot, help!

IUS (Mirena or Jaydess)

(hormones mostly act on the reproductive system, not the whole body)

It's decent

Plan B

How often do you want to remember to use your birth control?

The patch, ring, or injection

Each time

I already forgot, help!

Leave it and forget it!

Want something permanent?

Nope

Yes, no more kids for me.

Condoms, dental dam, cervical cap, diaphragm, sponge, spermicide, withdrawal, fertility awareness

Copper IUD

This can work AFTER you have had unprotected sex, and can then be left in to work in the future.

Sterilization

