

## Appendix H: Birth Control Methods That Can Be Used Without A Partner's Knowledge

# Birth Control Methods

## That Can be Used Without a Partner's Knowledge

What is it?	How does it work?	How long is it effective?	Helpful hints	Risks of detection
<b>Injection</b> Depo-Provera ("The Shot")	Depo-Provera is a hormone shot that prevents an egg from being released.	<b>3 Months</b>	Once administered, there is no way to stop the effects of the shot.	Irregular bleeding is common. Periods may stop. This may be a less safe option if her partner closely monitors her menstrual cycles.
<b>Emergency Contraception (EC)</b>  AKA: The Morning After Pill, Plan B, Next Choice	A single dose of hormones given by one or two pills within 120* hours of unprotected sex to prevent an egg from being released.	<b>Single Dose</b> <i>(must be taken after every instance of unprotected sex)</i>	Clients can get emergency contraception to keep on hand before unprotected sex occurs. EC is NOT an abortion; it works just like "regular" birth control pills. It prevents an egg from being released.	Clients can remove the pills from the packaging so they are easier to hide and partners will not know what they are.
<b>Implant</b> Nexplanon	A matchstick-sized tube of hormones inserted just under the skin of a woman's upper, inner arm to prevent an egg from being released.	<b>3 Years</b>	Unlike previous implantable methods (Norplant), it is generally invisible to the naked eye and scarring is rare.	The implant might be detected if touched.  Irregular bleeding is common. Periods may stop. This may be a less safe option if her partner closely monitors her menstrual cycles.  Many women bruise around the insertion site. The bruising may be noticeable for several days after insertion.
<b>Intrauterine Device (IUD)</b> ParaGard	A small T-shaped device inserted into the uterus to prevent pregnancy by	<b>10 Years</b> <i>(some data has shown effectiveness)</i>	This IUD contains copper. Periods may get slightly heavier. Period cramping may	The IUD has a string that hangs out of the cervical opening, which may be felt when fingers or a penis are in the vagina. If a woman is worried about her partner finding

<p><i>(non-hormonal)</i></p>	<p>changing the lining of the uterus so an egg cannot implant.</p>	<p><i>up to 12 years)</i></p>	<p>ParaGard can be used for emergency contraception if inserted up to 7 days after unprotected sex.</p>	<p>out that she is using birth control, she can ask the provider to snip the strings off at the cervix (in the cervical canal) so her partner can't feel the strings or pull the device out.</p> <p>If a woman's partner is monitoring her menstrual cycle, this is the least detectable birth control option because periods do not get lighter or stop. However, some spotting between periods is common at first.</p>
<p><b>Intrauterine Device (IUD)</b> Mirena &amp; Skyla <i>(hormonal)</i></p>	<p>A small T-shaped device inserted into the uterus to prevent pregnancy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• making the lining of the uterus thin so an egg cannot implant</li> <li>• thickening cervical mucus to prevent sperm from entering the uterus</li> <li>• inhibiting sperm from reaching or fertilizing an egg</li> <li>• stopping an egg from being released in some women</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mirena:</b> <b>5 Years</b> <i>(some data has shown effectiveness up to 7 years)</i></p> <p><b>Skyla:</b> <b>3 Years</b></p>	<p>Hormonal IUDs have a very small amount of hormone that is released which can lessen cramping around the time of a period and make periods lighter. Some women may stop bleeding altogether. All IUDs can be used by women regardless of their pregnancy history or age, but Skyla was FDA-approved specifically for women who have never been pregnant and younger women.</p>	<p>The IUD has a string that hangs out of the cervical opening, which may be felt when fingers or a penis are in the vagina. If a woman is worried about her partner finding out that she is using birth control, she can ask the provider to snip the strings off at the cervix (in the cervical canal) so her partner can't feel the strings or pull the device out.</p> <p>Irregular bleeding is common, especially in the first six months. Periods will change and may stop. This may be a less safe option if her partner closely monitors her menstrual cycles.</p>

\*EC packaging may say that the pills should only be taken within 72 hours after unprotected sex and, if given the two-pill option, to take the pills 12 hours apart. Research has proven EC is effective up to 120 hours after unprotected intercourse (although efficacy decreases after 72 hours) and, if given two pills, it is more effective to take both pills together rather than 12 hours apart. (<http://ec.princeton.edu/info/ecminip.html>)

Portions of this resource have been adapted from Futures Without Violence's *Healthy Moms, Happy Babies* training curriculum [www.FuturesWithoutViolence.org](http://www.FuturesWithoutViolence.org). We are indebted to Futures Without Violence for permission to adapt their materials and their assistance with this project.

