

# Condoms, contraception & how to get them

As I'm not looking to have children yet, the Pill is an important part of my daily routine. As important as brushing my teeth and putting on my mascara, it also gives me a freedom to make my own sexual choices...

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If you are going to have sex, it's pretty important, if not the MOST important thing, to get clued up on all things contraception. Get ready for the pit stop tour of the two most popular types of contraception: **The condom & the pill**



# The Condom

- A condom covers the penis to basically act as a barrier and prevent any sperm, or STIs that the man may have, from coming into contact with anything else. Condoms are the only method of contraception that protects against most STIs as well as pregnancy, so they are pretty important things!
- When condoms are used correctly they are 98% effective at protecting against pregnancy, so only two women out of a hundred will become pregnant by using condoms every year. That's a good success rate!
- Condoms also protect men from STIs that their partners may have. Some people like to use condoms with another method of contraception (e.g. the pill, implant, injection), so they can enjoy sex without having to worry about pregnancy and STIs... a very sensible way to do it.

Did you know that keeping condoms in your pocket or at the bottom of your bag for a long time can damage them? And expired condoms are less effective, so always check.

Watch out for oil-based products when using condoms. It can make latex condoms less effective, so use water-based lubricants instead 😊

There are also internal (female) condoms which are put into the vagina to line it.

Delivered

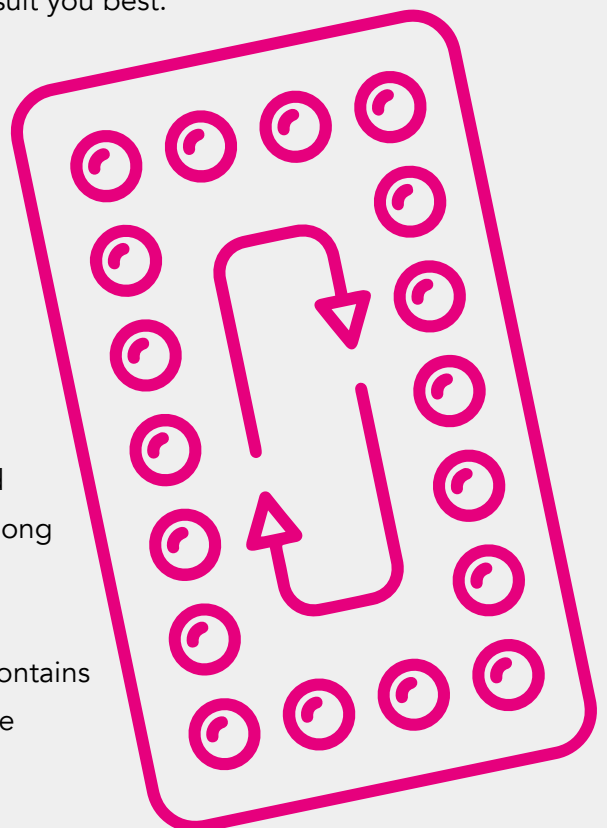


## How to Get it

- Condoms are free from certain GP surgeries, young people's clinics, GUM clinics, and through services like Brook: [www.brook.org.uk/find-a-service](http://www.brook.org.uk/find-a-service)
- You can also buy condoms from pharmacies, garages and most supermarkets, even if you're under 16. Don't be embarrassed about it; it shows you are taking sex, and caring for your partner's health, seriously. Bravo!
- If you have a disability and are concerned about putting on a condom, for yourself or your partner, it's a good idea to go to one of the clinics above; they can often give demonstrations, tips and advice to help.

## The Pill

- The Pill is taken orally, and is 99% effective if used correctly. It protects against pregnancy but not STIs, and there are different types and different brands of pill. Your GP will be best placed to advise you which one will suit you best.
- With most pill types, you will still have a period every month, although some stop your periods altogether. The Pill often gets a bad reputation for causing mood swings and weight gain, BUT it can also help to calm down heavy periods, regulate your monthly cycle, and ease PMS and acne.
- The Pill contains hormones, though, so can cause some nasty side effects. Stay aware of how you are feeling, and go back to the doctor if you don't think you are getting along with your pill type; there are many types to choose from.
- There are two main types of Pill: the combined pill (that contains two hormones called oestrogen and progestogen) and the mini-pill, that is progestogen only.



- Make sure you use your doctor and ask any questions. The clinic is always there to go back to if things aren't right. You will usually start on a 3 month Pill set and return every 6 months or so for check ups. If things go wrong before then or you have any queries, don't hesitate to go back.

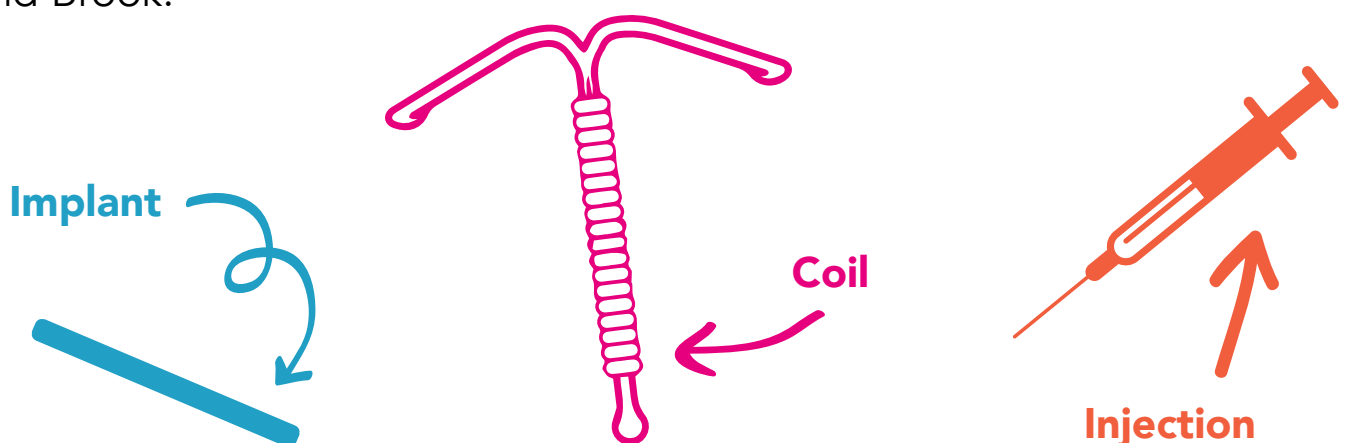
## How to Get it

- You can get both types of pill from your GP, young people's services, or contraceptive clinics.
- You can also buy them privately, but certain brands can be very expensive.

**If you have a disability:** It's really important to chat to your doctor honestly about how mobile you are. Some pill types are better for preventing blood clots and weight gain: two things you don't want to affect your movement!

## Other Types of Contraception

There are other forms of contraception, such as the implant, the female condom, the injection and the coil. The condom and the pill are the most popular, but you can find out about all forms of contraception with websites like NHS Choices and Brook.



There's also the Morning After Pill that can be bought from a pharmacy or doctor after unprotected sex, but as this is not planned contraception and can have very strong effects on your body, it is only recommended in an emergency.

## And if you don't use Contraception?

Without contraception, over 80% of women will fall pregnant within one year. Not having sex, or abstinence, is the only guaranteed way to protect yourself from pregnancy and STIs, but contraception can be up to 99% effective! If you're not looking to have children or chlamydia right now, we can't think of a better reason to be having safe sex!

## Extra support

Feel free to contact Mik or Emily at The Love Lounge:

[www.enhancetheuk.org/enhance/the-love-lounge](http://www.enhancetheuk.org/enhance/the-love-lounge)

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