

10 MINUTE CLINIC PODCAST SHOW NOTES

CONTRACEPTION

Dr Roger Henderson

Contraception, often referred to as birth control, encompasses a range of methods, techniques, and devices used to prevent unintended pregnancies. For centuries, individuals and communities have sought ways to manage reproduction, balancing personal, social, and health considerations. Modern contraceptive methods provide a variety of choices suited to diverse lifestyles, health needs, and cultural values, making it easier than ever for people to exercise reproductive control and make informed family planning decisions. Beyond pregnancy prevention, many contraceptive methods also offer health benefits, such as hormone regulation and reduced risk of certain diseases. However, navigating the options can be complex, as each method varies in effectiveness, potential side effects, and suitability for different individuals. Understanding contraception is essential not only for personal health but also for broader social and economic stability, as family planning is closely linked to improved educational and economic outcomes, especially for women. This 10 minute clinic podcast looks at an overview of the various types of contraception available for our patients in primary care, along with their effectiveness, advantages and disadvantages.

References and resources

[Sexual and Reproductive Health: Contraception: guidelines | RCGP Learning](#)

[UKMEC Calculator](#)

[Contraception - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

[Contraceptives, hormonal | Treatment summaries | BNF | NICE](#)

[Contraception: UK Medical Eligibility Criteria \(medscape.co.uk\)](#)

[FSRH Clinical Guideline: Male and Female Sterilisation \(September 2014\) | FSRH](#)

[FSRH Clinical Guideline: Fertility Awareness Methods \(June 2015\) | FSRH](#)

[FSRH Clinical Guideline: Barrier Methods for Contraception and STI Prevention \(2012, amended 2015\) | FSRH](#)

[Sexual and Reproductive Health Services, England \(Contraception\) 2021/22 - NHS England Digital](#)

Take home points

- When speaking with a patient about contraception always take into account their preferred option
- Initial counselling should include a general discussion about the risks and prevention of sexually transmitted infections
- If a long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) is being considered, discuss protection with condoms as well since LARCs do not provide protection against infection
- LARC methods are more cost effective than the combined oral contraceptive and may be more reliable in preventing unwanted pregnancy
- Patients who receive an ample supply of their contraceptive may be more likely to adhere to treatment
- Contraceptive methods can be divided into those that don't depend on the user remembering to use them, and those that do each time sex occurs
- Methods that don't depend on being remembered are the contraceptive implant, the IUD and IUS, the contraceptive injection and sterilisation

- Contraceptive methods that have to be remembered are the contraceptive patch, vaginal ring, combined Pill, progestogen-only Pill, external and internal condoms, diaphragm/cap with spermicide and fertility awareness methods
- Perfect contraceptive use means the method is used absolutely correctly every time. Typical use is when the method is not always used correctly
- Condoms are the best way to protect against sexually transmitted infections

