

All of these are safe while breastfeeding – for both you and your baby.

Your milk will come in at the same rate as it would without birth control. Your milk will still be good for your baby. Talk to your provider or lactation consultant about any concerns before or after you use any birth control method.

**If you choose to start hormonal birth control immediately after delivery, there is a VERY LOW (less than 1%) risk that your milk volume will be lower at first.*

MORE EFFECTIVE

Long acting: Start in a provider's office. Some can be started before you leave the hospital.

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| Implant | Small plastic rod under skin | Lasts 3-5 years |
| IUD | In uterus | Lasts 3-12 years (depending on whether copper or hormonal) |
| Shot | Injected | Lasts around 3 months |
| Sterilization | Procedure for either partner | One-time |

Short-term: Start with a prescription. Some can be filled before you deliver.

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|--|------------------------------------|---|
| Pill | Take daily | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Can lighten and regulate your period<i>Some kinds must wait 6 weeks after delivery to start</i> |
| Patch | Place on the skin once a week | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Can lighten and regulate your period<i>Must wait 6 weeks after delivery to start</i> |
| Vaginal ring | Place in vagina monthly | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Can be removed during sexCan lighten and regulate your period<i>Must wait 6 weeks after delivery to start</i> |
| Vaginal gel | Insert before sex | |
| Emergency contraception (Ella®) | Take as soon as possible after sex | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Works best when taken as soon as possible after sex |

Short-term: Methods you manage on your own.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Condom | External or internal (either partner) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Also prevents sexually transmitted infections |
| Emergency contraception (Plan B®) | Over-the-counter | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Works best when taken as soon as possible after sex |
| Fertility awareness | Keep track of your period to know when you're most likely to get pregnant | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Requires caution because your periods can be unpredictable after giving birth |



It is still possible to get pregnant if you have sex even 1 month after giving birth.

Before your baby is born, talk to your provider about your birth control options and make a plan.

Breastfeeding as Birth Control

It is possible to prevent pregnancy by breastfeeding. Other forms of birth control are much more reliable. Breastfeeding as birth control only works if

- Your period has not yet returned after giving birth
- Your baby is less than 6 months old
- Your baby only eats by breastfeeding (NO formula or other foods at all)
- You keep a strict breastfeeding schedule of every 4-6 hours
- You breastfeed directly (do not pump)

Some things to think about when choosing birth control

What are my plans for future pregnancy?

Think about whether you want to get pregnant again and how soon. Some types of birth control can prevent pregnancy for several years or permanently.

When or if you want to get pregnant again is a personal decision. Most doctors recommend waiting at least 12 months before trying to get pregnant again. Two pregnancies close together can be hard on your body and may put you at risk for problems.

Do I plan to breastfeed?

Some types of birth control use hormones to prevent pregnancy. Talk to your provider about what birth control is safest if you plan to breastfeed.

When can I start birth control?

You can start some kinds of birth control immediately after giving birth. With others, you may have to wait a few weeks before starting. Examples include the pill, patch, or vaginal ring. The wait is to reduce your risk of blood clots in the weeks after giving birth.

What do I want most from my birth control?

Do you want

- Birth control that is easy to use correctly and consistently
- A type of birth control that is most reliable
- Birth control that is easy to get
- Birth control that is affordable for you
- Birth control with few or no side effects
- Birth control with additional benefits
- Birth control that protects you from sexually transmitted infections

Talk to your provider about your options. They can help you choose the birth control that is best for you.



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