

FAMILY PLANNING/CONTRACEPTION WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

DID YOU KNOW?

- Research suggests that women who have more than 4 children are at an increased risk of maternal mortality.
- Family planning helps to delay pregnancies in younger women who face health problems and death associated with early child bearing.
- Family planning helps prevent pregnancy in older women, who face increased risks associated with pregnancy.
- By helping to reduce the rates of unplanned pregnancies, family planning helps to reduce the number of unsafe abortions.
- Family planning helps to reduce maternal and child mortality.
- Condoms do not provide 100% protection against STIs. It is best to practice abstinence or safe sex.

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Family planning/contraception/birth control is a device, method or medicine that aims to prevent pregnancy. It allows individuals who wish to limit their family size to do so and aids child spacing by preventing unwanted pregnancies. Some methods also prevent sexually transmitted infections (STI).

CONTRACEPTION METHODS

The choice of family planning method depends on factors such as your health status, how often you have sex and if you still want to have children.

There are 2 main types of contraception;

Hormonal Methods: uses hormones to stop the release of eggs or make it difficult for sperm to reach eggs that have been released; by thickening the cervical mucus. They include;

- Birth control pills - may contain estrogen and progestin or only progestin.
- Implants - small rods implanted under the skin which releases a continuous dose of hormone to prevent ovulation.
- Progestin Injections- like Depo-Provera given every 3 months.
- Skin Patch - placed on the body which releases a continuous dose of hormone
- Vaginal Ring - flexible ring placed in the vagina which releases hormones.
- Intrauterine Device (IUD) - small plastic or copper device placed in the uterus by a medical practitioner. This device releases small amounts of progestin.
- Emergency contraceptive pill - used to prevent pregnancy after unprotected sex.

Barrier Methods: stop sperm from getting to the egg. They include;

- Condom - is a thin latex or polyurethane sheath placed over the penis (male) or in the vagina (female) before intercourse.
- Diaphragm/Cervical cap - fits over the cervical opening/cervix to prevent sperm from entering the uterus.
- Vaginal Sponge - soft sponge which contains chemicals that kill sperm.

