

## Family Planning

Over half of all pregnancies in the United States are unplanned, even though easy access to birth control methods lets women choose when they want to be pregnant.

### ***Best methods of birth control:***

- ▶ **Low dose birth control pills (The Pill):**  
These are very effective in preventing pregnancy. They also lower the risk of ovarian cancer by 50% and do not cause cancer. Other health benefits include lighter periods, less menstrual cramps, and fewer breast cysts. Low dose pills do not cause infertility or cancer. In most healthy women, the pill can be used until menopause ("the change").
- ▶ **Intrauterine Device (IUD):**  
The new IUD is 99% effective and does not increase the risk of infection. It lasts up to 10 years.
- ▶ **Foam and Condoms:**  
Foam and condoms, used together, prevent pregnancy more than 95% of the time and help prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including the AIDS virus (HIV).
- ▶ **Morning After Pill:**  
The morning after pill is now available. This helps stop pregnancy if a condom breaks or you forget to use a method. However, you must call your health care provider within 72 hours.
- ▶ **Depo Provera, Norplant:**  
Many women like the "no hassle" methods such as Depo Provera (the shot) or Norplant (implants). These are very effective in pregnancy prevention and require no other effort to prevent pregnancy.

If you are sure you want no more children, talk to your doctor about ways to stop pregnancy forever (vasectomy for men, tubal ligation for women).

***This information is general. If your doctor tells you something different, follow his or her instructions.***

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*For more information about women's health issues, stop by our Resource Center at 2000 West First Street, Piedmont Plaza II, 1st Floor, Winston Salem, NC 27104, visit our website at <http://www.wakehealth.edu/WHCOE/> or contact us at (336) 713-4220.*