

my body

postnatal birth control

Why is postnatal birth control suggested?

As a postnatal person, it is still possible to become pregnant very soon after having a baby. You may want to consider birth control if you plan on having sex where pregnancy is a possibility. We recommend waiting between one and two years between pregnancies. You may be less likely to get pregnant if you're nursing your baby, but it's not effective enough to count on. You might decide to use birth control for reasons other than pregnancy, like regulation of your period. If you're interested in any of these options, ask your midwife. **Below are some good options for postnatal parents that can all be started right after birth or in the weeks after birth, and are safe for nursing.**

★★★★★ = most effective

★★★★ = very effective

Intrauterine device/IUD (Mirena® /Liletta®/Copper) ★★★★★

The intrauterine device (IUD) is a small, T-shaped device that your midwife inserts into your uterus. IUDs stop the egg and sperm from joining.

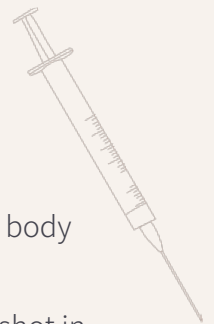
- Hormonal IUDs release a small amount of progestin into the uterus. They are approved for up to 3-7 years of use, depending on the type.
- The copper IUD releases a small amount of copper into the uterus and is approved for up to 10 years of use.



Birth control injection (Depo-Provera®) ★★★★

The birth control injection contains progestin. It works by preventing your body from releasing eggs.

- Your midwife can give you the shot in your arm or buttocks every three months.
- Because you have to return to the clinic to get the shots, birth control injections are not quite as effective at preventing pregnancy.



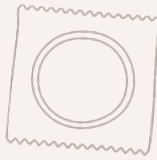
Birth control implant (Nexplanon®) ★★★★★



The birth control implant is a flexible rod the size of a matchstick that your midwife inserts under the skin in your upper arm.

- It releases progestin into the body and is approved for up to 3-5 years of use.

Condoms ★★★★★



Condoms provide a layer between the penis and vagina during sex.

Either an external condom (for the penis) or an internal condom (for the vagina) is used—not both at once.

- Both are typically made of latex, but they come in other materials if you're allergic to latex.
- In general, condoms protect against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. Condoms don't require a prescription, are cheap, and are available at pharmacies and many stores. Condoms are not quite as effective at preventing pregnancy as pills, IUDs, and implants.
- Internal condoms consist of an outer ring, a middle sheath that lines the vagina, and an inner ring that covers the cervix. External condoms cover the penis.

Progestin-only pill ★★★★★



This birth control pill only contains progestin. It prevents fertilization of the egg by the sperm and must be taken at the exact same time each day.

- If you miss a pill by more than three hours, you will need to use a back-up method for the next 48 hours.
- Birth control pills with estrogen and progestin can also be used, but they can decrease breastmilk supply.

Sterilization ★★★★★



Sterilization is permanent birth control.

- In people with uteruses, sterilization is performed by closing or removing the fallopian tubes, which are the part of your reproductive system that produces eggs.
- For people with penises, a vasectomy is an option. It takes about 2–4 months for the semen to become totally free of sperm after a vasectomy. A couple must use another method of birth control or avoid sex until a sperm count confirms that no sperm are present.

If you have questions about these or other methods, ask your midwife!