

Contraception and Abortion

Psy 3666: Human Sexuality
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Overview:

- Contraceptive Methods:
 - Barrier Methods
 - Hormonal Birth Control
 - Other Methods
 - Natural Family Planning Methods
 - Emergency Contraception
- Abortion
 - Physical and Psychological Effects
 - Longitudinal Effects

Contraception Effectiveness

(from Trussell, 2004)

- To find the table shown in class from Trussell (2004) that lists failure rates for all types of contraception, go to <http://www.lib.umn.edu/articles/ej.phtml> and search for the journal *Contraception*.
- Then, use **Find It** to locate the article:
 - Trussell, J. (2004). Contraceptive failure in the United States. *Contraception*, 70 (Issue 2), 89-96.
- The table you want is Table 1, on Page 90.

Contraception: Barrier Methods

- Condoms
 - Failure Rate When Used Correctly and Consistently: 2-5%
 - Failure Rate When Used Typically: 15-21%
 - Advantages
 - Disadvantages
 - Types

Condoms: Tips for Use

- Tips for Protection Against STIs:
 - Don't use spermicide with your condom (or a condom that contains Nonoxonyl 9).
 - Remember that only latex and polyurethane, not sheepskin, condoms protect against STIs.
 - Remember that condoms can only protect you against fluid-borne STIs, not skin-contact STIs.
- Tips for Improving Sensitivity:
 - Use a polyurethane condom (they are thinner).
 - For men: place a drop of lube (no more) in the tip of the condom before putting it on.
 - Try a high-sensitivity or ribbed brand, such as Contempo's Bareback or Rough Rider.
- Tips for Avoiding Breakage/Slippage:
 - Be sure to squeeze air from the tip, and leave room at the tip, when putting the condom on.
 - Do not use expired condoms.
 - Use a sized-to-fit condom.
 - Hold on to the condom during insertion and removal. Replace the condom if you lose your erection during sex play.
- Tips for Improving Spontaneity:
 - Keep condoms on your bedside table, not across the room. (Or close by wherever you have sex.)
 - Try putting a condom on with your mouth instead of your fingers.

Other Barrier Methods

- Diaphragms and Cervical Caps
 - Work by covering the cervix with a barrier and spermicide so sperm cannot get through.
 - Usually must be fitted by a health care provider to conform to your body (exception: Lea's Shield).
 - Inserted up to 6 hours before sex, left in place for at least 6-8 hours after intercourse.
 - Usually can't be used during menstruation (exception: diaphragm cap).
 - Less effective than other methods. (6-9% failure rate with perfect use, 16% failure rate with typical use)
 - **Much** less effective for women who have been pregnant before. (6 -26% failure rate with perfect use, 16-32% failure rate with typical use)
- Vaginal Sponge
 - No longer available in the U.S., but is scheduled to return to market soon.
 - Can be purchased online from Canadian pharmacies.
 - Work by covering the cervix and trapping, blocking, and killing sperm (with impregnated spermicide).
 - Can be left in place up to 24 hours, improving spontaneity.
 - Can't be used while menstruating.
 - Also less effective for women who have been pregnant (20% failure rate with perfect use; 36% with typical use.)
 - 9% failure rate for never pregnant women with perfect use; 16% with typical use.

Contraception: Hormonal Methods

- All work by mimicing the hormonal conditions of pregnancy, stopping a woman's body from ovulating.
- The Pill
 - Multiphasic Pills – levels of estrogen and progesterone change over the course of the month. May result in fewer negative sexual interest side effects than monophasic pills.
 - Monophasic Pills – Estrogen plus Progesterone at a single level. Different brands have different levels of hormones. High dose birth control pills must be avoided by women who smoke.
 - Progestin Only/Minipills – fewer side effects than combination pills, except for weight gain. Must be taken religiously. Less effective than other pills. May eliminate menstrual periods entirely after prolonged use.
 - Seasonale – Combination pill with fewer placebos; women have a period only once every three months.
- The Patch – skin patch that time-releases estrogen or progesterone into the bloodstream.
- NuvaRing – small, implantable plastic ring that releases estrogen and progesterone into the skin around the vagina and uterus.
- Implants (Norplant) – Progesterone only, released from soft rods implanted under the skin of a woman's forearm. Can be left in place for up to five years. May release inconsistent levels of hormones.
- Depo-Provera -- Progesterone only injection, given once every three months. Slow return to fertility after stopping the injections.

Hormonal Methods

- Failure rate for hormonal methods with perfect use: 0.05 to 0.3 percent.
- Failure rate for hormonal methods with typical use: 0.05% (Norplant) to 8% (pills, patch, and NuvaRing).
- Advantages:
 - High effectiveness; some methods do not even require you to remember to take them.
 - Protection against endometrial and ovarian cancers, and pelvic inflammatory disease.
 - Reduce menstrual flow and cramping, provide a regular "period."
- Disadvantages:
 - No protection from STIs.
 - Possible weight gain (especially with progesterone-only methods)
 - Possible decreased sexual desire and function
 - Increased risk of heart attacks, blood clots, and stroke. These risks are relevant for young women, especially if they smoke
 - Increased risk of breast cancer
 - Increased risk of migraine headache; headaches may worsen in those who already get them.
 - Interact with several common medications and herbs so that effectiveness is reduced.
 - Some methods are new; long term risks, effectiveness, etc., still unknown.

Other Methods

- IUD/IUS
 - Small plastic t-shaped device inserted into the uterus by a physician.
 - Work by causing a low-grade uterine infection, which affects fertility in a variety of ways.
 - Effectiveness: 0.1 to 0.8% failure rate.
 - Advantages: very effective, IUS decreases menstrual flow, least expensive over time, do not interfere with spontaneity.
 - Disadvantages: can (rarely) cause uterine perforation and sterility, and increase risk of PID; IUDs may make periods heavier and more painful, can be expelled from the uterus and must be checked regularly.
- Spermicide
 - Come in cream, jelly, foam, or film forms.
 - Used with a barrier method, applied with an applicator, or placed in the vagina with a finger.
 - Work by killing sperm before they reach the cervix.
 - Effectiveness: 18% failure rate with perfect use (when used alone); 29% failure rate with typical use (when used alone). Foam may be slightly more effective than other forms.
 - Advantages: Easy to use, available without a prescription
 - Disadvantages: High failure rate; when used alone and regularly may increase risk of STIs (because increases tearing in vaginal tissues); can cause allergic reactions or skin irritation (if this occurs, try switching brands); can taste unpleasant.

Natural Family Planning Methods

- How Natural Family Planning Is Done:
 - Standard Days Method (CycleBeads)
 - Couples avoid intercourse (or use another method) on days 8 -19 of a woman's menstrual cycle. Use color-coded beads to track their cycle. Works for women with menstrual cycles between 26 and 32 days.
 - Basal Body Temperature Method
 - Body temperature rises by $4/10^{\text{th}}$ of a degree (F) after ovulation, and remains elevated until menses.
 - Women chart their temperature using a BBT thermometer, taking their temperature at the same time each day, to learn when ovulation occurs.
 - Abstain from intercourse (or use another method) between onset of menses and 4 days after the rise in BBT.
 - Cervical Mucus Method (Billings, or Ovulation Method)
 - Secretions from the vaginal change over the course of the cycle, going from bloody, to mostly dry, to thick, sticky, and cloudy, to wet, slippery, and stretchy (fertile), to thick or absent.
 - Couples abstain from intercourse from beginning of fertile secretions to 4 days after last day of fertile secretions.
 - Symptothermal Method (combines all three of the above)

Natural Family Planning

- Effectiveness
 - What would you guess? Better than which methods? Worse than which?
 - Failure rate with perfect use ranges from 1-9% (symptothermal is best method).
 - Failure rate with typical use natural family planning methods is about 20-25% -- similar to barrier methods and spermicides!
- Advantages: natural, no side effects; ok for people with religious restrictions to use; increases awareness of your own fertility, very low cost.
- Disadvantages: lots of work, requires careful and consistent monitoring for most methods (cyclebeads are an effective exception); requires relatively long periods of abstinence (or a backup method); needs to be followed for several months before being used as primary method of birth control; may be impossible for women with irregular cycles.
- Persona Fertility Computer
- Withdrawal (removal of the penis from the vagina before ejaculation)
 - Failure rate with perfect use: 4%
 - With typical use: 27%
 - Some men may have more fertile pre-ejaculate than others!

Emergency Contraception

- Preven: combination of estrogen and progesterone, in a higher dosage than regular birth control pills.
- Plan B: progesterone only, in a higher dosage than regular birth control pills
- Both work by preventing ovulation, or preventing implantation into the uterus, by causing hormonal changes in a woman's body.
- Do not cause abortion, and will not harm a pregnancy already begun.
- Can be used **up to 5 days** after unprotected sex, but **more effective the sooner they are taken**.
- Less effective than hormonal methods of birth control; reduce the risk of pregnancy following unprotected sex by 75-89%.
- Requires a prescription: women should ask their doctors *during a routine visit* for a prescription to fill if the need arises. Can also be obtained online or by phone (see resources).
- Side effects include nausea, fatigue, and dizziness.
- Costs about \$25.

Abortion

- Methods of Abortion
 - Medical Abortion:
 - RU-486 (Mifepristone)
 - Methotrexate
 - Surgical Abortion
 - First Trimester
 - Second Trimester
- How many women get abortions?

Effects of Abortion

- Impact of Denying Women Abortions on Their Children
 - Czech study of women who were denied abortions compared their children to those of matched women who wanted their pregnancies.
 - Unwanted children had fewer friends and responded more poorly to stress than wanted peers by age 9.
 - By age 23, more likely to report that their mothers weren't interested in them, more likely to have had psychological treatment, more likely to have problems with drugs, the legal system, marital problems, and work conflicts, than wanted peers.
 - Some researchers believe that declines in crime in the 1990s in the U.S. were due to the improved availability of abortion, and unwanted children not being born.
- Psychological Impact of Abortion on Women
 - Feelings following abortion are diverse, and may include relief, guilt, shame, regret, anxiety, depression, doubt, and anger.
 - Having negative psychological experiences following abortion is more likely if woman is young, lacks social support, has a strong religious background, is having an abortion for medical or genetic reasons, had difficulty making a decision about the abortion, was persuaded to have the abortion, had psychiatric problems before the abortion, or had a late-abortion procedure.
 - Strong negative reactions are rare; relief is the most common emotion felt following an abortion.

Campus Resources

- Free Condoms on Campus:
 - SHADE Office (N207 Boynton)
 - Boynton's Women's Clinic
 - Queer Student Cultural Center (205 Coffman)
 - American Indian Student Cultural Center (204 Coffman)
 - Black Student Union (209 Coffman)
- Boynton Pharmacy sells prescription and nonprescription birth control.
- Getting Emergency Contraception: Boynton's Medical Information Nurse can issue you a prescription for emergency contraception over the phone. Call **612-625-4607** during regular hours (Mon-Fri 8 am to 4:30 pm).

Web Resources

- Online access to local, emergency contraception: <http://www.getthepill.com/>
- SHADE: <http://www.tc.umn.edu/~safersex/>
- Boynton Contraceptive Services: <http://www.bhs.umn.edu/services/contraceptive.htm>
- Canadian Source for Contraceptive Sponges: <http://www.feelbest.com/>
- Online Source for sized-to-fit condoms, Contempo condoms (bareback, rough rider), and every other kind of condom imaginable: <http://www.condomania.com/>
- Learn to Use the Symptothermal Method of Natural Family Planning: <http://irh.org/symptothermal.html>
- Cyclebeads Website: <http://www.cyclebeads.com/>
- "Innovative Contraception from Around the World," including the Persona computer for sale: http://www.birthcontrol.com/product_info.php?products_id=51
- Planned Parenthood: Abundant Reproductive Health Resources and Information: <http://www.plannedparenthood.com/pp2/portal/>
