# Birth Control and Breastfeeding

**Mothers frequently worry about using birth control when they are breastfeeding. Some mothers worry that their milk production may decrease or that their baby's exposure to birth control medications is harmful.**

There are many birth control options available that are safe to use while breastfeeding. Here are some safe options that are least likely to affect your baby or your breastmilk supply. Consult with your Healthcare Provider or a Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) if you have questions or concerns regarding the use of birth control while breastfeeding.

Many women believe they cannot get pregnant until they start their first period (menstrual cycle) following childbirth. However, women ovulate before their period. So, if you have unprotected sex around the time you ovulate, you can become pregnant before starting your period. For sexually active moms, it is a good idea to speak to a healthcare provider about birth control options to prevent an unplanned pregnancy.



## Non-Hormonal Methods

**Non-Hormonal methods are noted to have the least impact on the breastfeeding relationship because they do not interfere with the hormones that support breastfeeding.**

| Methods | Effects on Breastmilk Supply | Effects on Baby |
|---|---|---|
| **Condoms:** Female or male condoms | None | None |
| **Diaphragm/Cervical Caps:** These must be fitted by your healthcare provider | None | None |
| **Copper Intrauterine Device (IUD):** The Copper IUD (ParaGard) is a non-hormonal IUD inserted by your healthcare provider. | None | None |
| **Spermicide:** Comes in a variety of forms | None | None |
| **Sponge:** A barrier device that contains a spermicide | None | None |
| **Lactational Amenorrhea Method (LAM):** This method can delay ovulation if the guidelines are met. Guidelines include exclusively breastfeeding at the breast without the use of supplementation, pacifiers, or baby foods. You breastfeed your baby a minimum of every four hours during the day and a minimum of every six hours during the night. You delivered your baby within the last six months. You have not had your period. Can be effective for the first six months after birth or until you ovulate. | None | None |

## Hormonal Methods

**Using hormonal methods may interfere with the natural hormones that support breastmilk production. To reduce these risks, establish your milk supply before using a hormonal method of birth control.**

| Methods | Effects on Breastmilk Supply | Effects on Baby |
|---|---|---|
| **Progestin Only (POP):** Also known as the "mini pill." Progestin does not impact hormones that support breastfeeding if used after your breastmilk supply has been established. | Possible | None |
| **Progestin Only Implant:** Inserted under the skin by your healthcare provider. Progestin does not impact hormones that support breastfeeding if used after your breastmilk supply has been established. | Possible | None |
| **IUD:** Contains a small amount of progestin that is released over time. It is inserted by your healthcare provider. May impact your milk supply especially if your breastmilk supply is not established. | Possible | None |
| **Progestin Injection/Depo-Provera:** Contains progestin that is released into the bloodstream overtime. Can decrease milk supply if taken before breastmilk supply is established. | Possible | None |
| **Estrogen and Progestin Pill "Combination Pill":** Contains both progestin and estrogen. The release of estrogen into the blood stream can decrease or stop breastmilk supply. | Yes | None |
| **Vaginal Ring:** Releases estrogen into the blood stream and can decrease or stop breastmilk supply. | Yes | None |
| **Contraceptive Patch:** Releases estrogen into the blood stream and can decrease or stop breastmilk supply. | Yes | None |

*Hormones progestin and estrogen are known to enter breast milk, but no harmful effects have been seen in babies.

**Additional helpful information can be found on the Breastfeeding website under Resources and Materials:**

- Is My Baby Getting Enough?
- Low Milk Supply

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**24-Hour Breastfeeding Hotline**
**1-800-833-4642**

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