

# AYAM

## Adolescent-Young Adult Medicine

14 East 90<sup>th</sup> St. Suite 1B

New York, NY 10128

Tel: 212-987-1414 Fax: 212-987-1518

[www.ayam-nyc.com](http://www.ayam-nyc.com) [office@ayam-nyc.com](mailto:office@ayam-nyc.com)

### METHODS OF CONTRACEPTION

Most adolescents and young adults will choose a method of contraception from among several options, described below. Each method has advantages and disadvantage. Various personal and medical factors should be considered when making the important decision of choosing a method of contraception, and these issues have been (or will be) discussed with you in detail. Feel free to ask all the questions you have!

➤ **CONDOM PLUS INTRA-VAGINAL SPERMICIDE:**

The condom is the ONLY method of contraception which also reliably protects you from acquiring or spreading sexually transmitted infections (such as herpes, chlamydia, human papilloma virus (HPV), HIV and others.) HOWEVER, the condom used ALONE is NOT a reliable enough method of contraception because condoms sometimes break or fall off. The male partner uses a condom (preferably latex), and the female partner inserts spermicide in her vagina as a second barrier to sperm should a mishap occur with the condom. Spermicides come in several forms, including FOAM (Delfen, Emko), which is immediately effective upon insertion, or SUPPOSITORIES (Encare, Semicid), which take about 10 minutes to dissolve and become effective, or various jellies and creams. **CONDOMS AND SPERMICIDES ARE AVAILABLE IN PHARMACIES WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION.** (See also Plan B, on p.2)

➤ **THE PILL:**

The oral contraceptive PILL is the MOST EFFECTIVE method of contraception if used properly. Pills contain the female hormones estrogen and progesterone and act primarily by PREVENTING OVULATION each menstrual cycle. The female partner must take a pill each day whether she is having intercourse or not. Some girls and women experience annoying side effects (such as nausea, headaches, moodiness, spotting) when they first start the pill, but these side effects usually go away. Luckily, serious medical complications related to the pill are VERY rare, especially in young healthy adolescents and young adults. Several POSITIVE side effects associated with the pill include shorter, lighter and less painful periods, and less acne. Women who have taken the pill have a **lower** risk of ovarian and endometrial cancer. THE PILL CAN BE OBTAINED ONLY WITH A PRESCRIPTION, and after a thorough medical history and physical examination. The pill does not protect against the spread of sexually transmitted infections and should always be used with a condom for that purpose.

➤ **THE DIAPHRAGM :**

The diaphragm is a “barrier” method of contraception that is used together with a spermicidal cream or jelly. It works by blocking the movement of sperm into the uterus. The diaphragm is inserted into the vagina, preferably within a half hour of having intercourse. The diaphragm has been available as a contraceptive method for many years (longer than the pill) and has proven to be very reliable if used correctly. It is free of any serious side effects, and adaptable to any frequency of intercourse, because it is used only when needed. Diaphragms come in several sizes, and must be fitted to the individual by a health professional in our office. Therefore, the diaphragm can only be obtained WITH A PRESCRIPTION. The diaphragm does not protect against the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and must be used with a condom for that purpose.

➤ **OTHER “NEW” HORMONAL METHODS:**

(methods similar to the pill worth considering)

**THE RING** (Nuva vaginal ring)

**THE PATCH** (Evra patch)

➤ **OTHER METHODS OF CONTRACEPTION:**

(to consider and discuss)

Depo-provera

Implanon

Intra-uterine device (Paragard, Mirena, Skyla)

➤ **PLAN B EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION** (morning-after pill):

Plan B is recommended if there is an episode of unprotected intercourse such as not using a condom, or the condom breaks or falls off, and no other method of contraception (such as the pill, IUD or diaphragm) is being used.

Plan B consists of **one pill**, containing the hormone progesterone. It is best to take Plan B as soon as possible (preferably within 24 hours) but it is still effective if used within 72 hours of such a mishap. **PLAN B CAN BE OBTAINED WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION**, but we encourage our patients to consult with us if they have any questions. It is very safe and rarely causes any side effects. Plan B should NOT be used as your primary contraceptive method.

*This outline is only a brief overview of methods of preventing an unwanted pregnancy. Additional reading materials are available at our office and online. Please feel free to ask us any questions or about any concerns you may have, **before** making any final decision about contraception.*