

FACTFILE: GCSE HOME ECONOMICS: Child Development



Methods of Family Planning

Learning Outcomes

Students should be able to:

- Evaluate family planning methods and assess the benefits of family planning



Methods of Contraception

Improved and easily accessible contraception means that couples have choices and can plan when to have children. Before having a child, it is important that couples discuss their feelings with

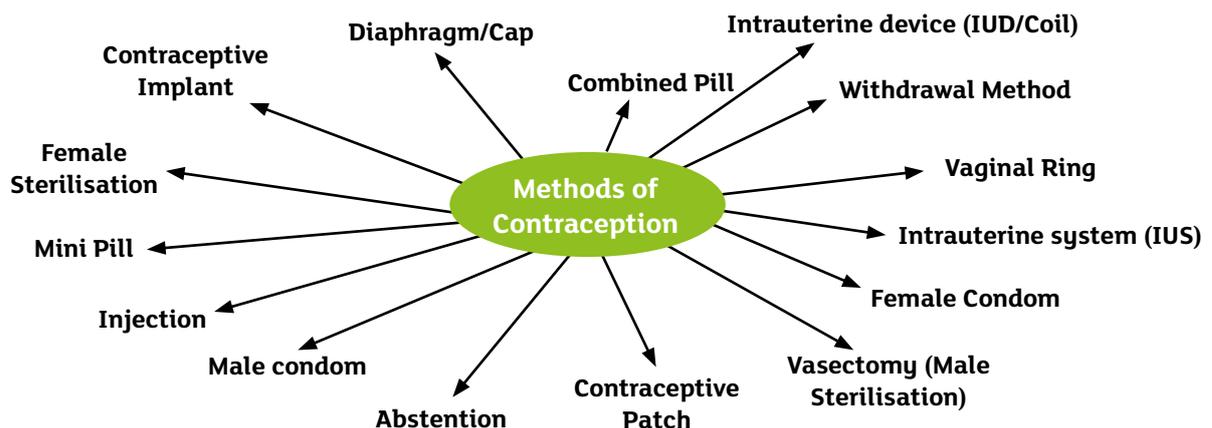
each other in an honest and open way, that they consider the number of children they would like, reach some agreement on the way in which they will be raised. Having a baby has a profound effect on the lives of parents.

'Contraception' is the word used to describe the prevention of pregnancy.

Its basic aim is to either:

- Prevent the egg and sperm from meeting so that fertilisation cannot take place; or
- Prevent implantation of a fertilised egg into the uterus.

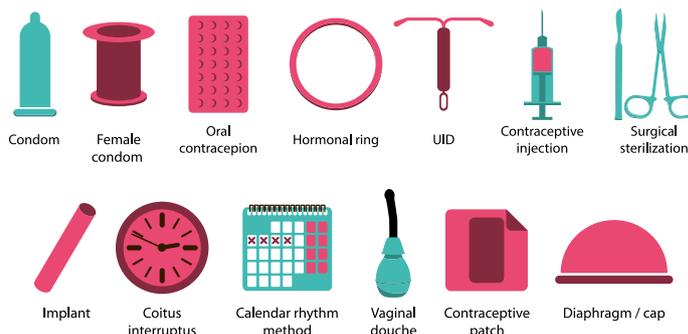
There are a range of different contraceptive options currently available. The type that works best will depend on an individual's health and circumstances.



Group Activity

Each group choose one method of family planning. Explain the method and list three advantages and three disadvantages to share with the class.

Contraception methods



Contraceptive - how it works	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Contraceptive implant</p> <p>The implant steadily releases the hormone progesterone into the bloodstream, which prevents the release of an egg each month (ovulation).</p> <p>It also thickens the cervical mucus, which makes it more difficult for sperm to move through the cervix, and thins the lining of the womb so a fertilised egg is less likely to implant itself.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It works for 3 years. • It is an option if oestrogen-based contraception, such as the combined contraceptive pill, contraceptive patch or vaginal ring are not suitable. • It's safe to use while breastfeeding. • Fertility will return to normal as soon as the implant is taken out. • It may reduce heavy periods or painful periods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary side effects during the first few months, like headaches, nausea, breast tenderness and mood swings. • Periods may be irregular or stop altogether. • May cause acne or acne may get worse. • A small procedure may be needed to have it fitted and removed. • It does not protect against STIs.
<p>Intrauterine device IUD or coil</p> <p>The IUD is similar to the intrauterine system (IUS), but instead of releasing the hormone progesterone like the IUS, the IUD releases copper into the womb.</p> <p>The copper alters the cervical mucus, which makes it more difficult for sperm to reach an egg and survive. It can also stop a fertilised egg from being able to implant itself.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It protects against pregnancy for 5 or 10 years, depending on the type. • Once an IUD is fitted, it works straight away. • Most women can use it. • There are no hormonal side effects, such as acne, headaches or breast tenderness. • It is safe to use an IUD if breastfeeding. • It is possible to get pregnant as soon as the IUD is removed. • It is not affected by other medicines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periods may become heavier, longer or more painful, though this may improve after a few months. • It does not protect against STIs. • If an IUD is fitted, it may lead to a pelvic infection if not treated.

Contraceptive - how it works	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Intrauterine system IUS</p> <p>The IUS is similar to the intrauterine device (IUD), but instead of releasing copper like the IUD, it releases the hormone progestogen into the womb.</p> <p>It thickens the cervical mucus, which makes it more difficult for sperm to move through the cervix, and thins the lining of the womb so an egg is less likely to be able to implant itself.</p> <p>For some women, it can also prevent the release of an egg each month (ovulation), but most women continue to ovulate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It works for 5 years. • It is one of the most effective forms of contraception available in the UK. • Periods can become lighter, shorter and less painful – they may stop completely after the first year of use. • It is safe to use an IUS if breastfeeding. • It is not affected by other medicines. • May be a good option if the hormone oestrogen cannot be taken, which is used in the combined contraceptive pill. • It is possible to become pregnant as soon as the IUS is removed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periods may become irregular or stop completely, which may not be suitable for some women. • Some women experience headaches, acne and breast tenderness after having the IUS fitted. • Some women experience changes in mood. • An uncommon side effect is that some women can develop small fluid-filled cysts on the ovaries – these usually disappear without treatment. • An IUS does not protect against STIs. • When an IUS is fitted, a pelvic infection may occur.
<p>Female sterilisation</p> <p>Female sterilisation is an operation to permanently prevent pregnancy. The fallopian tubes are blocked or sealed to prevent the eggs reaching the sperm and becoming fertilised.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 99% effective at preventing pregnancy. • Blocking the fallopian tubes and removal of the tubes should be effective immediately – but use contraception until the next period. • It will not affect hormone levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It does not protect against STIs. • It cannot be easily reversed, and reversal operations are rarely funded by the NHS. • It can fail – the fallopian tubes may rejoin, although this is rare. • There is a very small risk of complications, including internal bleeding, infection or damage to other organs. • An increased risk of an ectopic pregnancy, if pregnancy occurs after the operation.
<p>A vasectomy (male sterilisation)</p> <p>A vasectomy (male sterilisation) is a surgical procedure to cut or seal the tubes that carry a man's sperm to permanently prevent pregnancy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A vasectomy is more than 99% effective at preventing pregnancy. • Long-term effects on health are rare. • It may be chosen as a simpler and safer alternative to female sterilisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A vasectomy does not protect against STIs. • A vasectomy can not be easily reversed, and reversals are rarely funded by the NHS. • Contraception must be used after the operation until tests show semen is free of sperm.

Contraceptive - how it works	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Mini-Pill (progesterone).</p> <p>The progestogen-only pill (POP) prevents pregnancy by thickening the mucus in the cervix to stop sperm reaching an egg.</p> <p>The desogestrel progestogen-only pill can also stop ovulation.</p> <p>Progestogen-only pills contain the hormone progesterone, but don't contain oestrogen.</p> <p>Needs to be taken reliably every day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it's taken on time, the mini-pill is 99% effective. • Pills are easy to take. • Can relieve PMT and painful periods. • Can be used when breastfeeding. • It is useful if the hormone oestrogen cannot be taken. • Can be used at any age – even if a smoker and over the age of 35. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mini-pill is unreliable if a pill is missed by as little as 3 hours. • It must be prescribed by a doctor. • Vomiting and diarrhoea make it unreliable. • May not have regular periods while taking it – periods may be lighter, more frequent, or may stop altogether. • It does not protect against STIs.
<p>Combined Pill (Oestrogen / progesterone)</p> <p>The pill prevents the ovaries from releasing an egg each month (ovulation).</p> <p>It also thickens the mucus in the neck of the womb, so it is harder for sperm to penetrate the womb and reach an egg.</p> <p>It thins the lining of the womb, so there is less chance of a fertilised egg implanting into the womb and being able to grow.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 99.8% effective if taken on time. • Pills are easy to take. • It usually makes periods regular, lighter and less painful. • It reduces the risk of cancer of the ovaries, womb and colon. • It can reduce symptoms of PMS. • It can sometimes reduce acne. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The combined pill is unreliable if taken 12 hours late. • It must be prescribed by a doctor. • Antibiotics make it unreliable. • It can cause temporary side effects such as headaches, nausea, breast tenderness and mood swings. • It can increase blood pressure. • It does not protect against STIs.
<p>Injection (Progesterone)</p> <p>The contraceptive injection steadily releases the hormone progesterone into the bloodstream, which prevents the release of an egg each month (ovulation).</p> <p>It also thickens the cervical mucus, which makes it difficult for sperm to move through the cervix, and thins the lining of the womb so a fertilised egg is less likely to implant itself. The injections are given in the bottom, upper arm or tummy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each injection lasts for either 8 or 13 weeks. • It's an option if oestrogen-based contraception cannot be taken. • Do not have to remember to take a pill every day. • It is safe to use while breastfeeding. • It is not affected by other medicines. • It may reduce heavy, painful periods and help with premenstrual symptoms for some women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periods may change and become irregular, heavier, shorter, lighter or stop altogether. • It does not protect against STIs. • There can be a delay of up to 1 year before periods return to normal, risk of pregnancy. • May cause weight gain.

Contraceptive - how it works	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Contraceptive patch</p> <p>The patch releases a daily dose of hormones through the skin into the bloodstream to prevent pregnancy.</p> <p>It contains the same hormones as the combined pill – oestrogen and progestogen – and works in the same way by preventing the release of an egg each month (ovulation).</p> <p>It also thickens cervical mucus, which makes it more difficult for sperm to move through the cervix, and thins the womb lining so a fertilised egg is less likely to be able to implant itself.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each patch lasts for 1 week. The patch is changed every week for 3 weeks, then a week off without a patch. • It is still effective if vomiting or diarrhoea occurs. • Can be worn in the bath, when swimming and while playing sports. • If periods are heavy or painful the patch can help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may not be suitable for women who smoke and who are 35 or over, or who weigh 90kg (14 stone) or more. • The patch does not protect against sexually transmitted infections. • The patch can raise blood pressure, and some women get temporary side effects, such as headaches. • It may be visible. • It can cause skin irritation, itching and soreness.
<p>Vaginal ring</p> <p>The ring steadily releases the hormones oestrogen and progestogen into your bloodstream, which prevents the release of an egg each month.</p> <p>It also thickens the cervical mucus, which makes it more difficult for sperm to move through the cervix, and thins the lining of the womb so a fertilised egg is less likely to implant itself.</p> <p>One ring provides contraception for a month.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is easy to put in and take out. • Do not have to think about it every day. • The ring isn't affected if vomiting or diarrhoea occurs. • May help with premenstrual symptoms. • Period-type bleeding usually becomes lighter, more regular and less painful. • It can have additional health benefits, such as reducing the risk of some cancers. • It has no long-term effect on fertility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not feel comfortable inserting or removing it from the vagina. • Can have spotting and bleeding in the first few months. • May cause temporary side effects, such as increased vaginal discharge, headaches, nausea, breast tenderness and mood changes. • The ring does not protect against STIs. • Need to remember to change it and put in a new one.
<p>Male condom (98% effective if used correctly)</p> <p>Condoms are a “barrier” method of contraception. They are made of very thin latex (rubber), and are designed to prevent pregnancy by stopping sperm from meeting an egg.</p> <p>They can also protect against STIs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When used correctly and consistently, they are a reliable method of preventing pregnancy. • They help to protect both partners from STIs. • There are no medical side effects from using condoms. • Only need to use them when having sexual intercourse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condoms are very strong but may split or tear if not used properly. • Some people may be allergic to latex.

Contraceptive - how it works	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Female condom (95% effective if used correctly)</p> <p>Female condoms are a barrier method of contraception worn inside the vagina. They prevent pregnancy by stopping sperm meeting an egg.</p> <p>A female condom can be put into the vagina before sex.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female condoms help to protect both partners from STIs. When used correctly, they are a reliable method of preventing pregnancy. There are no serious side effects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female condoms are very strong, but they may split or tear if not used properly. They are not as widely available as male condoms and can be more expensive.
<p>Diaphragm or cap (92% effective if used correctly)</p> <p>A diaphragm or cap is a barrier method of contraception. It fits inside your vagina and prevents sperm passing through the cervix (the entrance of the womb). Needs to be used with a gel that kills sperm (spermicide).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only need to use a diaphragm or cap when having sexual intercourse. There are usually no serious associated health risks or side effects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's not as effective as other types of contraception, and it depends on remembering to use it and using it correctly. It does not provide reliable protection against STIs. It can take time to learn how to use it.

Natural Family Planning

Natural family planning identifies fertile and infertile times in the menstrual cycle so that intercourse can be timed to avoid the possibility of pregnancy; both partners must be committed to this, trained in its use and understand how it works. The benefits of natural family planning are that no chemical or physical intervention is used, there are no side effects and all cultures, faiths and religions find it acceptable. However, these methods are unreliable particularly if periods are irregular or the woman is ill, also very careful daily records must be kept and intercourse must be avoided during the fertile period. It isn't very effective, though effectiveness can be increased by using a computerised urine reader.

Contraceptive - how it works	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Cervical Mucus</p> <p>This changes in texture and amount at different times in the menstrual cycle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is useful for those who for medical reasons cannot use other methods. Drug free. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires the woman to know her body really well. Requires daily monitoring especially close to ovulation and mid cycle. Time consuming.
<p>Temperature Method</p> <p>The body temperature rises after ovulation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is useful for those who for medical reasons cannot use other methods. Drug free. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires keeping daily temperature records. Time consuming. Requires daily monitoring especially close to ovulation and mid cycle.

Contraceptive - how it works	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Calendar Method</p> <p>Uses the length of the menstrual cycle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is useful for those who for medical reasons cannot use other methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires regular monitoring of periods and length of cycle. Periods may be irregular, so difficult to be exact. General health difficulties may disturb the length of the menstrual cycle.
<p>Persona (Computerised menstrual cycle monitor)</p> <p>Monitors changes in temperature, urine and saliva.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor measures temperature, urine and saliva. Drug free. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires an understanding of how to use and record and interpret the data. Expensive.
<p>Withdrawal Method</p> <p>The withdrawal method or 'being careful' involves the penis being removed before ejaculation so that no sperm are placed in the vagina. This method is, however, very unreliable as semen may leak from the penis before ejaculation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is often practised by people who cannot use other methods. It can be fairly reliable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often, even if both partners are careful, a little semen could leak from the penis. This can often leave partners frustrated because the penis has to be withdrawn before ejaculation takes place.
<p>Abstention</p> <p>Abstention or saying 'no' is, of course, 100% reliable; there is no intercourse so there is no possibility of sperm and egg meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No risk of pregnancy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May cause tension in the relationship.

Activity

In pairs and using the information provided complete the table.

Discuss your answers with other groups.

Family Planning Methods Which Stop Implantation	Family Planning Methods Which Stop The Sperm And Egg Meeting

The Benefits of Family Planning

There are many benefits when a couple plan to have a family. Consider the following scenario.

Zak and Julie have recently got married. They would like to have a family but feel they are not ready. Discuss the benefits of family planning for Zak and Julie.

