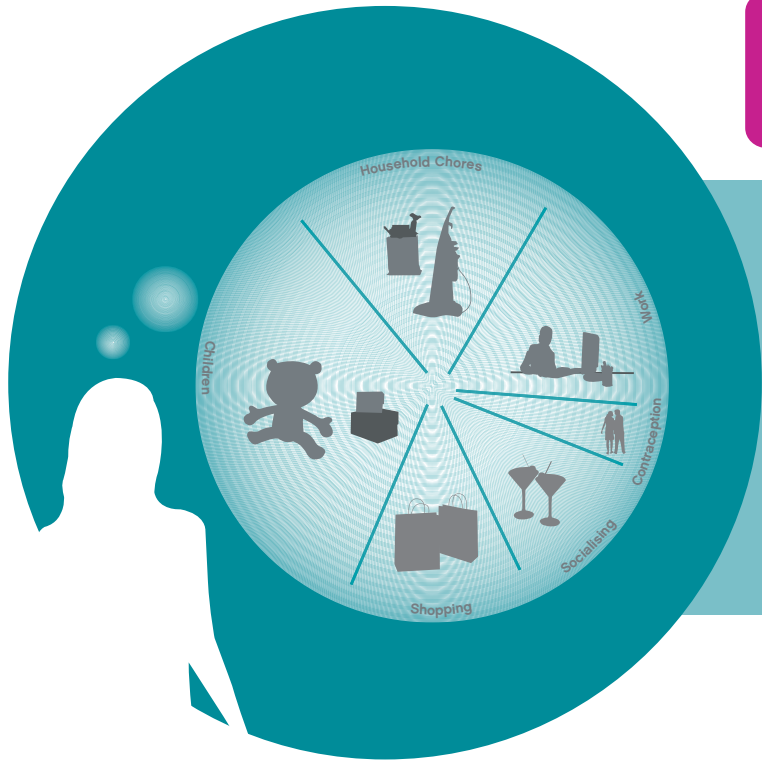


Life control not just birth control



Life Control?

According to research by Schering Health Care Ltd, leading contraceptive manufacturers, more than half (52%) of mums who consider their families complete would be very upset or devastated to find out they were pregnant again.¹ Most women are still unaware of the simple, reversible long term contraceptive options available – which can actually help give mums one less thing to think about.



“Finding the right contraception is more than just a birth control decision for women, it’s a life control decision – allowing them to decide if and when they are ready for another or their first child.

There is more choice available to women now than ever before, with many modern long-acting reversible contraceptives suitable for busy women juggling work, children, partner, housework... The government has pledged to increase use of long term contraception in a bid to reduce the amount of unplanned pregnancies.

Long term contraceptives come in various forms – the intra-uterine system, the intra-uterine device, injections and implants. The wonderful thing about them is that once they are in place women can forget all about contraception for anything from three months to 10 years and simply get on with enjoying their lives... and their sex life!”

What’s important to women in terms of long term contraception?

- A reliable contraceptive which you don’t have to remember to take every day?
- A method of birth control that has a low dose of hormone so minimises side effects?
- Instantly reversible contraception so you can decide exactly if/when you are ready for more children?
- Lighter periods?
- A contraceptive that won’t interfere with your sex life?

Mum’s the Word

1

Nearly six in ten (59%) mums say they haven’t managed to visit their doctor in the last year to discuss their options, let alone find the contraceptive that’s right for them²

2

The drastic step of sterilisation is used by 13% of mums, who perhaps don’t realise other effective long term contraceptives exist³

3

Few women opt for reversible long term contraception, such as the IUD (5%) or IUS (4%)⁴

4

Instead they choose short term measures including the Pill (20%) and condoms (10%)⁴

5

More than a quarter (28%) of women don’t use any form of contraception at all⁵

1 The Modern Motherhood Report, February 2005, commissioned on behalf of Schering, p69
2 The Modern Motherhood Report, February 2005, commissioned on behalf of Schering, p81
3 The Modern Motherhood Report, February 2005, commissioned on behalf of Schering, p93
4 The Modern Motherhood Report, February 2005, commissioned on behalf of Schering, p91
5 Consumer Contraception Survey, Schering Health Care Limited, February/March 2006

Women's long term reversible contraceptive choices

Life
control
not just
birth
control

IUS (intra-uterine system)

The IUS is a modern contraceptive which sits inside the uterus so you don't have to think about your contraception every day. The hormones work where they're needed, in your uterus, meaning you're taking fewer hormones than with The Pill (which means fewer side effects). Yet the IUS is an even more reliable contraceptive than The Pill*

Advantages

- It generally takes less than five minutes to be positioned by a doctor or nurse and it can stay in place for up to five years
- It can be removed at any time, resulting in a rapid return to normal fertility
- Women using the IUS often experience shorter, lighter (and less painful) periods
- The IUS can be used by women of any age and because it's in position for up to five years, it takes the daily hassle out of contraception

Possible disadvantages

- May notice irregular bleeding for the first three months but this should settle down
- Infection, changes in mood and sex drive may occur
- Other possible side-effects include headaches, spotty skin and breast tenderness. These usually reduce or go away after a few months
- It doesn't protect you from sexually transmitted infections, so you may have to use condoms as well

IUD (intra-uterine device)

An IUD is a small plastic and copper device that is fitted in the uterus and stops the egg settling in the uterus

Advantages

- Works as soon as it is inserted into the womb
- Works for three to 10 years depending on type
- Normal fertility returns as soon as the IUD is removed
- It is not affected by other medicines

Possible disadvantages

- Periods may be heavier, longer or more painful. This may improve after a few months
- It doesn't protect you from sexually transmitted infections, so you may have to use condoms as well

The implant

An implant is a small flexible rod placed just under the skin in your upper arm which releases a progestogen hormone

Advantages

- Effective, long term hormonal method of contraception which protects you from pregnancy for up to three years
- Don't have to think about contraception for as long as the implant lasts
- Normal level of fertility will return as soon as the implant is taken out
- It may reduce heavy, painful periods

Possible disadvantages

- Side-effects may include headaches, spotty skin, tender breasts, bloating, changes in mood and sex drive
- Some women experience changes in mood and sex drive
- Irregular bleeding may last for more than a few months
- It doesn't protect you from sexually transmitted infections, so you may have to use condoms as well

The injection

Contraceptive injections contain a progestogen hormone. They last for around 8 – 12 weeks

Advantages

- Don't have to think about contraception for as long as the injection lasts
- As with all long-acting methods, it can be used if you are breastfeeding
- May reduce heavy painful periods and help with premenstrual symptoms

Possible disadvantages

- Periods, and fertility, may take a few months to return after stopping injections
- Irregular bleeding may continue for some months after injections stop
- Some women report having headaches, abdominal pain or discomfort, dizziness, spotty skin, tender breasts, bloating, weight gain and changes in mood and sex drive
- The injection cannot be removed from your body, so if you have any side effects, you have to be prepared for them to continue during the time it is inserted and for some time afterwards
- Because of concerns over its effects on bone density, care must be taken for use of this method in women under 18 and over 45
- It doesn't protect you from sexually transmitted infections, so you may have to use condoms as well

* Guillebaud J. Contraception Today (4th edition). Martin Dunitz, London 2000.