



Congratulations for choosing to breastfeed your baby! You already know breastfeeding is the healthiest food for your baby, but did you know that it can be a form of natural birth control for you? Read ahead to find out how the first six months of exclusively breastfeeding can help prevent pregnancy!

You also may have heard that some kinds of birth control can change how much breast milk your body makes. We cannot tell you which kind of birth control to use, but the following facts will help you know your options so you and your doctor can choose which kind of birth control is best for you.

Recommended Birth Control Methods While Breastfeeding

Birth control methods that are completely safe for a breastfeeding mom.

These methods are the most natural and do not use any hormones. Generally, you do not need to see a health care professional except for IUD placement or sterilization procedures.

- **Lactational Amenorrhea Method (LAM)**
- Condoms (the only birth control method that may also prevent sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS)
- Diaphragm
- Cervical Cap
- Sterilization
- Withdrawal
- Natural Family Planning
- Spermicides
- The Sponge
- Copper T Intrauterine Device (IUD)



Birth Control Methods to Use with Caution

The following methods contain the hormone "progestin" only (no estrogen). They may delay or prevent milk production if taken sooner than 6 weeks after childbirth. If you plan to breastfeed, it is important not to use these methods until after 6 weeks to protect your milk supply.

- Depo-Provera
- Minipill
- Progesterone-releasing Intrauterine System (IUD)
- Single-rod Implant

Birth Control Methods NOT Recommended While Breastfeeding

The following methods contain hormones (progestin and estrogen) that may actually delay or prevent milk production altogether if taken at any point while breastfeeding.

- The Ring
- The Patch
- The Pill
- Emergency Contraception





Lactational Amenorrhea Method

The lactational amenorrhea method (LAM) of birth control is a temporary form of natural family planning that can be used by women who have recently given birth and are breastfeeding. It is the safest and one of the most effective methods of birth control for a breastfeeding mom.

To use LAM, you must be able to say yes to all four statements:

- You only breastfeed your baby. (You do not give your baby any other food, formula, or drinks.)
- You breastfeed your baby at least every four hours during the day, and every six hours at night — no exceptions.
- Your baby is less than 6 months old.
- You have not started your monthly period.

If you can say yes to all four statements, congratulations! You are using the LAM form of birth control. LAM is 98% effective when all four conditions exist. LAM is a temporary method of birth control because it does not work as well when you can no longer say yes to all four statements.

Your future is important! Family planning is a powerful way to protect your family. Research has shown, when pregnancies are planned:

- Women and their children stay healthier.
- Children and their parents get more education.
- Families have more money.
- Marriages are more likely to last.
- Violence among family members is less likely.
- Fathers are more likely to stay involved in their children's lives.

Thinking carefully before you have sex makes good sense. Choosing a birth control method that is compatible with breastfeeding is just as important in protecting your baby and your milk supply.

Questions about:

Family Planning?

Women's Health Program: Dial 2-1-1 for information.

Dept. of State Health Services Community Health Services: (512) 458-7796

Family Planning Clinic Locator: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/famplan/default.shtm>

Family Health Services Information and Referral Line: (800) 422-2956

Local Family-Planning Clinic: _____

Local Health Department: _____

Breastfeeding?

Breastfeeding Hotline: (800) 514-6667

WIC: (800) 942-3678

Local WIC Clinic: _____

Breastfeeding Peer Counselor: _____

Local Lactation Consultant: _____

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