

# MEDICAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA



# Definition

- Medical Eligibility criteria for starting use of contraceptive methods is based on WHO guidelines.
- MEC helps a provider to decide whether a particular contraceptive method can be used, in the presence of a given individual characteristic or medical condition
- Each condition is defined as representing either an individual's characteristics (e.g., **age** , **history of pregnancy**) or known pre-existing medical (**diabetes**, **hypertension**).



# Purpose of the Medical Eligibility Criteria

1. To base guidelines for family planning practices on the best available evidence
2. To address misconceptions regarding who can and cannot safely use contraception
3. To reduce medical barriers
4. To improve access and quality of care in family planning



# MEC Classification

**Category 1:** A condition for which there is no restriction for the use of the method

**Category 2:** A condition where the advantages of using the method generally outweigh the theoretical or proven risks

**Category 3:** A condition where the theoretical or proven risks usually outweighs the advantages of using the method

**Category 4:** A condition that presents an unacceptable health risk if the contraceptive method



# WHO MEDICAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA CLASSIFICATION CATEGORIES

Classification	With clinical judgment	With limited clinical judgment
1	Use method in any circumstances	Yes Use the method
2	Generally use: advantages outweigh risks	Yes Use the method
3	Generally <u>do not</u> use: risks outweigh advantages	No Do not use the method
4	Method not to be used	No Do not use the method