

# **Dealing with Common Family Planning Myths & Misconceptions**

**Facts behind these  
myths and misconceptions (in FAQs format)**



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# Q: Is family planning a form of abortion?

Answer: **No.**

- Family planning is not abortion.
- Abortion is ending of pregnancy, while FP prevents pregnancy through the use of contraceptives.
- FP prevents induced abortion by helping couples avoid unplanned pregnancies.



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# Q: Are family planning methods harmful to health?

Answer: **No.**

- All family planning methods are safe, effective & reliable, if properly used.
- Couples can choose the method that is best suited (“hiyang”) for them depending on their needs and health condition.



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# Q: Will using a contraceptive method increase or decrease sexual desire?

Answer: No

- Sexual desire varies from person to person.
- In general, use of contraceptives does not affect an individual's sexual desire.
- In fact, the use of contraceptives frees the couple from the fear of unplanned pregnancies.
- This enhances the couple's sexual relationship.



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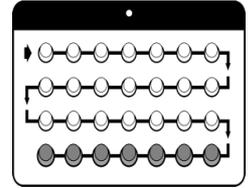
# PILLS



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# Q: Will pills accumulate in the body and cause different health problems?

Answer: No



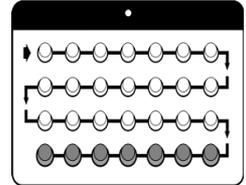
- After pills are swallowed, they dissolve in the digestive system just like any food or medicine.
- They do not accumulate anywhere in the body
- After they produce their contraceptive effect, the hormones in the pills are metabolised in the liver and gut and are then eliminated from the body.
- Each pill lasts about 24 hours in the woman's body and does not "get stuck" anywhere. That is why pills are taken everyday, preferably at the same time, to be effective.



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# Q: Is it true that pills cause cancer of the ovary and the lining of the uterus?

Answer: **No**



## Facts: Ovarian and endometrial cancer

- Pills protect its users from cancer of the ovaries and cancer of the lining of the uterus
- This protection continues for 15 or more years after stopping the use of pills.

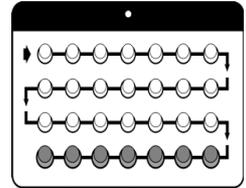


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# Q: Is it true that pills cause cancer of the breasts?

## Facts: Breast Cancer

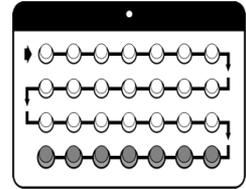
- ❑ Research findings about pills and breast cancer are difficult to interpret:
  - Both, pill users and women who do not use pills, can have breast cancer



# Q: Is it true that pills cause cancer of the cervix?

Answer: **No**

- ❑ Cervical Cancer is caused by Human papilloma Virus (HPV). It is a common STI. Major risk factors include multiple pregnancies, having first pregnancy at a young age, multiple sexual partner and smoking.

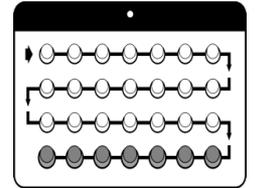


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**Q: Is it true that pills cause delay in conceiving or prevent women from being able to have children in the future?**

**Answer: No**



- Pills do not cause infertility regardless of how long a woman has taken them.
- Women who stop using pills can become pregnant right away.
- it does not reduce your chances of becoming pregnant once you stop taking it.

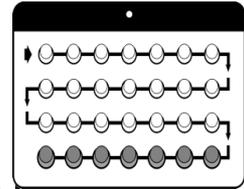


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# Q: Is it true that pills can cause birth defects or abortion?

Answer: **No**



- Pills are taken to prevent conception, not to cause an abortion.
- Pills prevent ovulation (maturing and release of an egg), so that fertilization cannot occur. Therefore, if there is no fertilization (or meeting of egg and sperm), there can be no pregnancy. Abortion cannot happen without pregnancy.
- If taken correctly, pills are very effective in preventing pregnancies, however, in the event of pregnancy, evidence shows that pills do not cause birth defects or abortion.

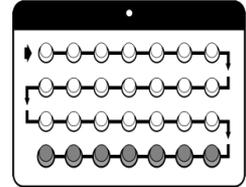


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# Q: Do pills encourage infidelity or promiscuity in women?

Answer: No



- There is no evidence that pills affect women's sexual behavior.
- In fact, using contraception shows responsible behavior to avoid unintended pregnancy and STI.

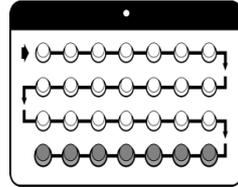


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# Q: Do pills reduce sexual pleasure or interest in sex, or cause frigidity in women?

Answer: **No**



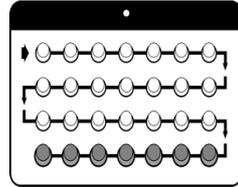
- ❑ There is no evidence that pills affects a woman's drive. Although some women using pills have reported either an increase or decrease in sexual interest and performance, it is difficult to say whether such changes are a result of the pills or other life events.
- ❑ Use of pills frees the couple from the fear of unplanned pregnancies, enhancing sexual relationship.



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# Myth: Do pills cause women to gain or lose weight?

## Answer: No

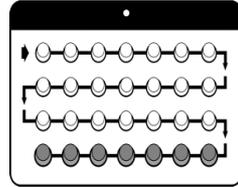


- Most women do not gain or lose weight as a result of pills use.
- A woman's weight may fluctuate naturally due to changes in age or life circumstance.
- Because changes in weight are common, many women attribute their natural weight gain or loss to the use of pills.



**Q: Should I take the pill only on days that I have sex with my husband?**

**Answer: NO**



You must take your pills every day in order not to become pregnant.

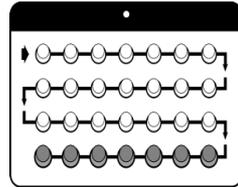


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**Q: Does the pill cause vaginal dryness leading to painful sexual intercourse?**

**Answer: NO**



There is no evidence showing that the pill causes vaginal dryness.



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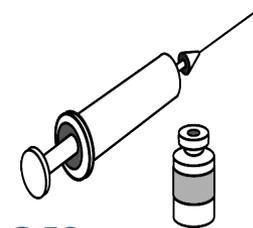
# INJECTABLES



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# Q: Do injectables cause permanent infertility?

Answer: NO



- ❑ Studies show that, on the average, women get pregnant:
  - 9 to 10 months after their last injection of DMPA
  - 1 to 2 months or average of 5 months after their last injection of the combined injectables.

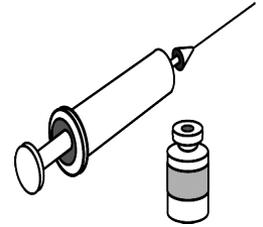


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# Q: Do injectables cause cancer?

## Answer: NO

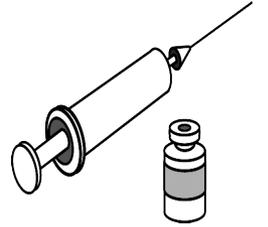


- ❑ In fact, injectables protect against cancer of the lining of the uterus and cancer of the ovary.
  
- ❑ Findings between injectable use and breast cancer are similar to findings with pills:
  - both injectable users and women who do not use injectables can have breast cancer



# Q: Do injectables cause abortion?

Answer: NO



- Injectables prevent pregnancy.
- If there is no pregnancy, abortion cannot occur.
- Research shows that it will never disrupt an existing pregnancy nor harm the baby.

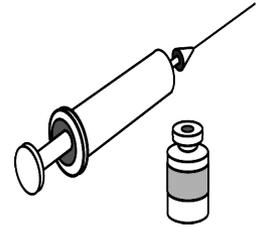


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# Q: If I get pregnant while using injectables, will it harm my baby?

Answer: NO



- Pregnancy during injectable use is very rare.
- In the rare event that a woman becomes pregnant while using injectables, there is no harm to the baby because the hormones in injectables are the same that women produce during pregnancy.
- Injectables are safe.

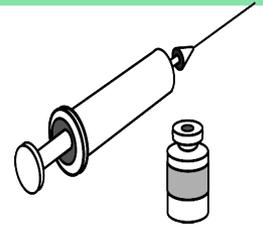


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# Q: Is my menstrual blood stored inside my uterus when I use injectables?

## Answer: NO



- Some women using injectables experience no monthly menstrual bleeding because there is no build-up in the endometrium so there is no breakdown or resulting bleeding.
- Thus, Blood are not stored in the uterus.
- Lack of menstruation has health benefits: it helps prevent anemia.

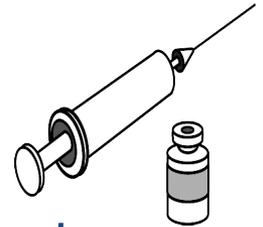


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# Q: Are injectables harmful to the breast milk or to the babies that are breastfed?

Answer: NO



- There is no evidence that injectables negatively affect breast milk quality or production or the duration of lactation.
- Infants whose mothers have received injectables while breastfeeding develop similarly to infants of mothers who have not received DMPA.





# MALE CONDOM



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# Q: Can the condom come off or break during sexual intercourse?

Answer:

- ❑ Those who choose the condom should learn how to use it properly to minimize the possibility that it will break or slip off during sexual intercourse.



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# Q: Can male condoms decreases man's libido and can cause impotence?

## Answer: NO

- ❑ There is no evidence that condom use causes impotence
- ❑ Many men, in fact, find that condoms help them keep an erection longer and reduce premature ejaculations.
- ❑ Some complain that it reduces sensation but many couples learn to enjoy using condom.
- ❑ There are many types of condoms and a couple can choose a brand that would suit them best and give them the most pleasure.



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# Q: Are condoms only used with prostitutes or for casual/extra marital sexual relationships?

## Answer: NO

- ❑ Condoms are an appropriate contraceptive method for anyone, regardless of marital status or sexual behavior.
- ❑ While many casual partners rely on condoms for STI protection, married couples all over the world use condoms for pregnancy protection too (e.g., Japan).



# Q: Is it painful for a woman to have sexual intercourse with a man wearing a condom?

Answer: No

- Sexual intercourse may be painful for women who do not lubricate enough during lovemaking.
- Lubricated condoms are available for women who experience vaginal dryness during intercourse.



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**Q: If a condom slips off during sexual intercourse, is it possible for it to get lost inside the woman's body?**

**Answer: NO**

- ❑ Studies indicate that condom rarely slips off completely during intercourse.
- ❑ Slippage during withdrawal can be minimized if the rim of the condom is held against the base of the penis during withdrawal after ejaculation
- ❑ However, if a condom does slip, it will go no further than the woman's vagina, where it can be easily retrieved, with no need for surgery.



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# Q: Are condoms effective in preventing pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections, including HIV?

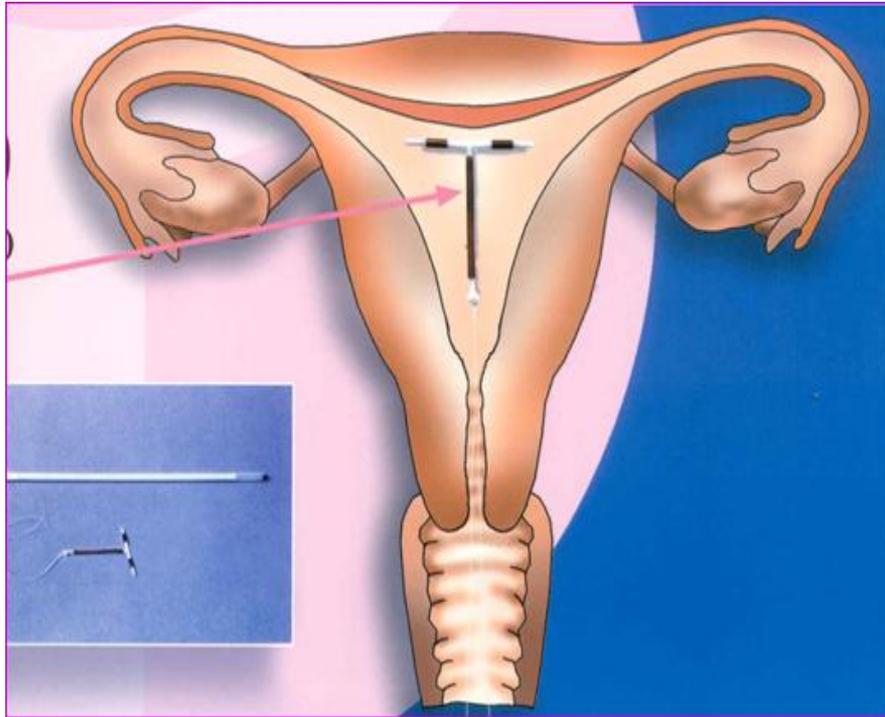
Answer: YES

- ❑ Condoms are the only contraceptive method that can protect against both pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.
- ❑ Latex condoms are made of fine material; no HIV can pass through it.
- ❑ In fact, when used consistently and correctly, condoms prevent up to 95% of HIV transmission.



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# IUD

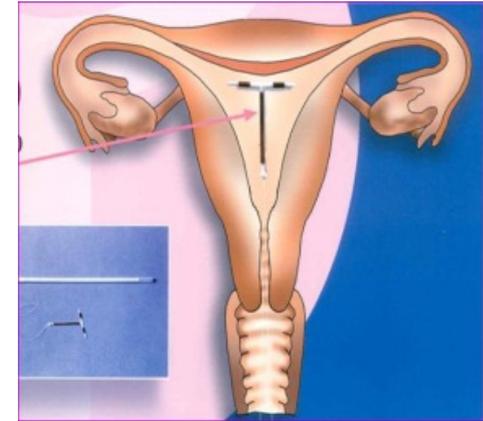


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# Q: Does the IUD causes abortion?

Answer: NO.

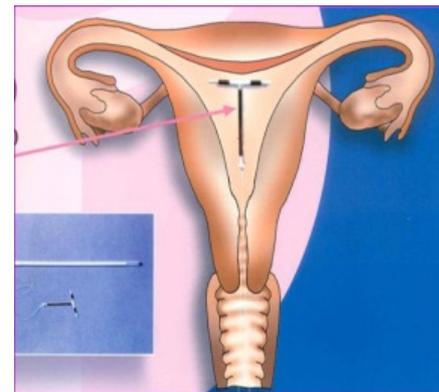
- IUDs do not work by causing abortions.
- It works by preventing fertilization.
- The copper-bearing IUD acts as a spermicide, killing or impairing sperm so they cannot reach the egg.



# Q: Does the IUD cause cancer of the uterus?

Answer: NO.

- ❑ Studies have shown that the IUD does not cause cancer of the uterus.



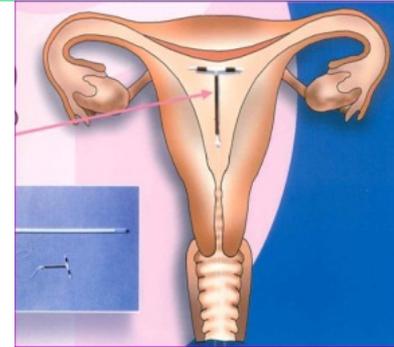
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**Q: If a woman becomes pregnant while using an IUD, will this become implanted inside her baby's body or brain?**

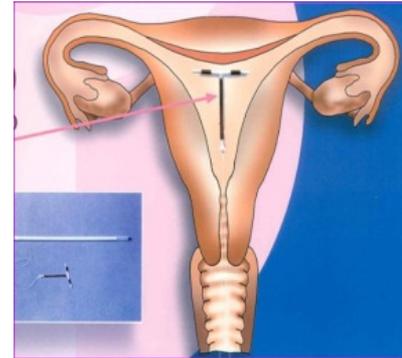
**Answer: NO**

- The IUD cannot be implanted in a baby's body or brain.
- It does not cause malformation of the fetus.
- It is very rare for a woman using an IUD to become pregnant because the copper-bearing IUD acts as a spermicide, killing or impairing the sperm so they cannot reach the egg.



**Q: If I use an IUD, will I still be able to have a baby?**

**Answer: YES**



- Almost all women who use an IUD will be able to bear children once it is removed.



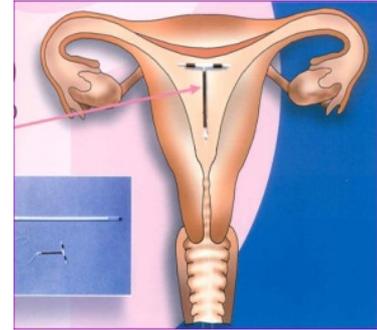
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# Q: Can the string of an IUD get entangled with the man's penis during sex?

## Answer: NO

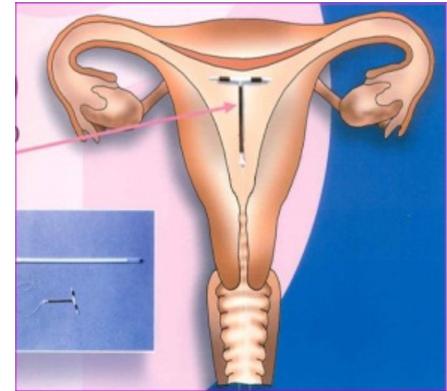
- ❑ The strings of an IUD may get into contact with the penis during sexual intercourse but the strings are very thin and soft, that the man will never feel it.
- ❑ Sometimes IUD strings are left long, and a man can feel them. Cutting the strings (1-2cms) will solve the problem
- ❑ A man may feel discomfort during sex if the IUD has started to come out through the cervix. If a woman suspects this, she should see a doctor or nurse.



# Q: Does the IUD rot in the uterus after prolonged use?

Answer: NO

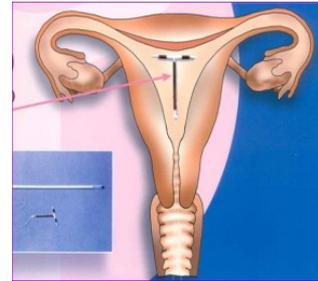
- ❑ The IUD is made of inert material which does not rot in the uterus even with prolonged use.



# Q: Can an IUD be pushed out of the uterus during sex and travel to other parts of a woman's body?

## Answer: NO

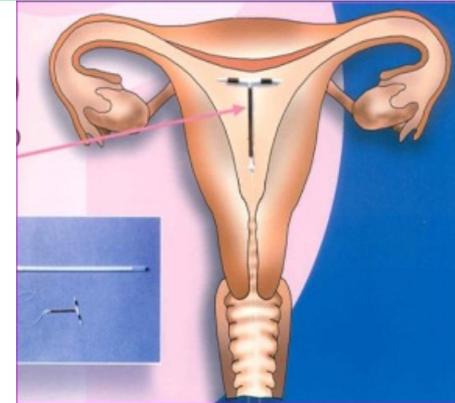
- ❑ The IUD stays within the uterus until it is removed by a trained health provider. Just like a nut/seed in a shell.
- ❑ There is no passage from the uterus where it can possibly travel to other organs of the body.
- ❑ If ever expelled, it will only come out from the vagina.



# Q: Is IUD harmful to health?

Answer: NO

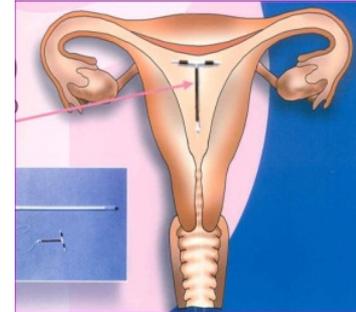
- ❑ It does not cause Cancer: IUDs are safe. Infact, research suggests that non-hormonal IUDs (Copper-T 380A) may protect against cancer of the lining of uterus and cervical cancer.
- ❑ It does not increase risk for STIs, including HIV. However, usually women who have high risk of exposure to gonorrhoea or chlamydia should not have an IUD inserted.

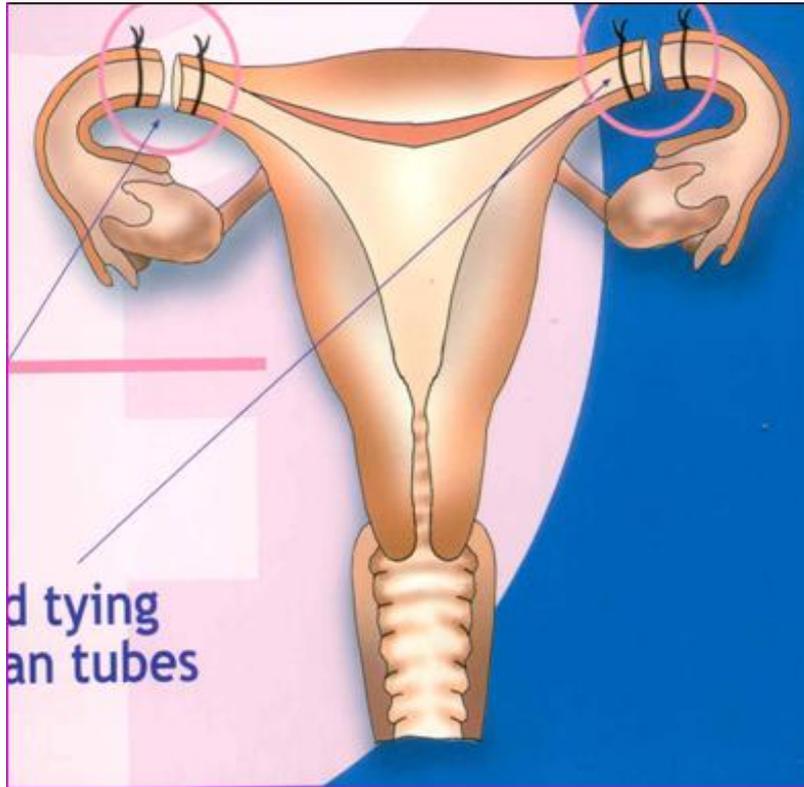


# Q: Can IUD cause infertility?

## Answer: NO

- ❑ Studies find no increased risk of infertility among women who have used IUDs, including young women and women with no children.
- ❑ Untreated Pelvic Inflammatory Diseases (PID) caused by STIs are known and proven cause of infertility.
- ❑ After removal of IUD, there is no delay in a woman's return to fertility.





# TUBAL LIGATION

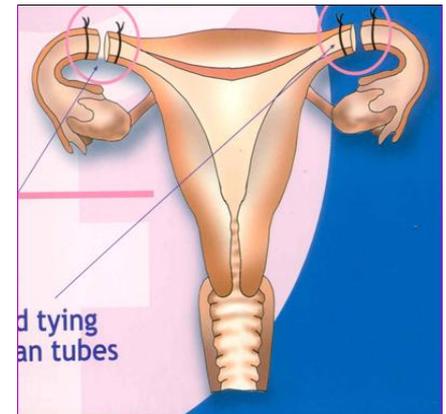


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**Q: Does it involve removal of some or all parts of the woman's reproductive organs?**

**Answer: NO**

- Only the fallopian tubes are blocked or cut.
- All genital organs including ovaries, uterus, cervix and vagina remain well functioning and women still have monthly menstruation
- Sexual relationship is not affected.



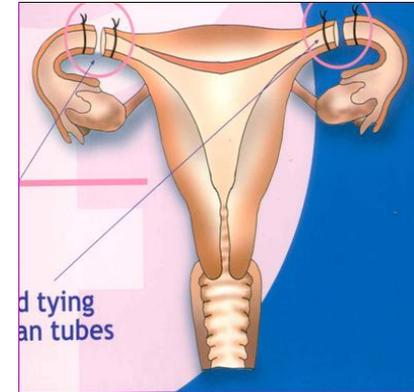
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# Q: Does it cause illnesses due to hormonal imbalance?

Answer: NO

- ❑ There are no side effects. The procedure does not cause ill health, backache, weakness or other illness.
- ❑ Female hormones are not affected and there will be neither loss of femininity nor any change in sexual functioning.



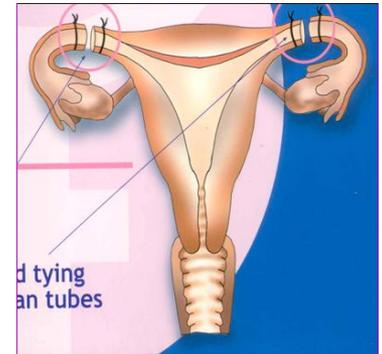
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# Q: Is ligation a painful and complicated procedure?

Answer: NO

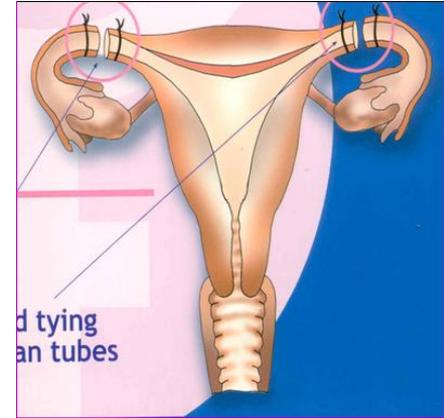
- ❑ New techniques have been developed, using local anaesthesia, which make ligation possible without a hospital stay.
- ❑ Discomfort felt after the procedure can almost always be relieved with basic medications like paracetamol, ibuprofen, and mefenamic acid.



# Q: After ligation, will I become sick and be unable to work?

Answer:NO

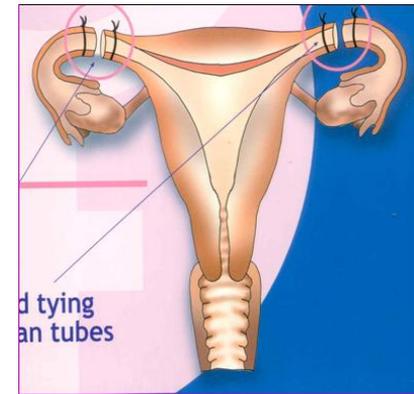
- ❑ After ligation you can resume regular activities as soon as you are free from post-procedure discomfort.
- ❑ Usually, doctors advise the woman to take 2-3 days rest and avoid lifting of heavy objects for a week.



# Q: Does ligation shorten the life span of a woman?

Answer: NO

- ❑ Ligation has been practiced for several generations, and there is no medical evidence that ligation shortens the life of a woman.



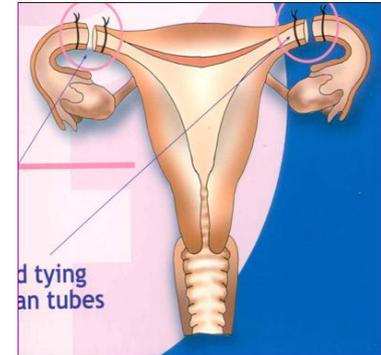
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# Q: Does ligation cause irregular menstruation and early menopause?

## Answer: NO

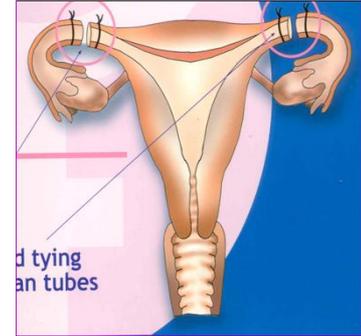
- ❑ Research finds no major changes in bleeding patterns after female sterilization.
- ❑ If a woman was using another FP method before sterilization, her bleeding pattern will return to the way it was before she used it.
- ❑ Ligation will not hasten menopause. The woman will continue to ovulate and menstruate although she can no longer get pregnant. However, in general a woman's monthly bleeding usually becomes less regular as she approaches menopause.



# Q: Can ligation make a woman lose or gain weight?

Answer: NO

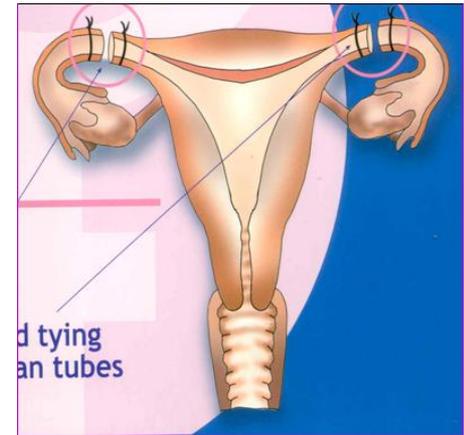
- ❑ Sterilization does not cause any changes in weight, appetite or appearance.
- ❑ However, older women are more likely to choose sterilization as a method of family planning than younger women, and most women gain weight as they age.

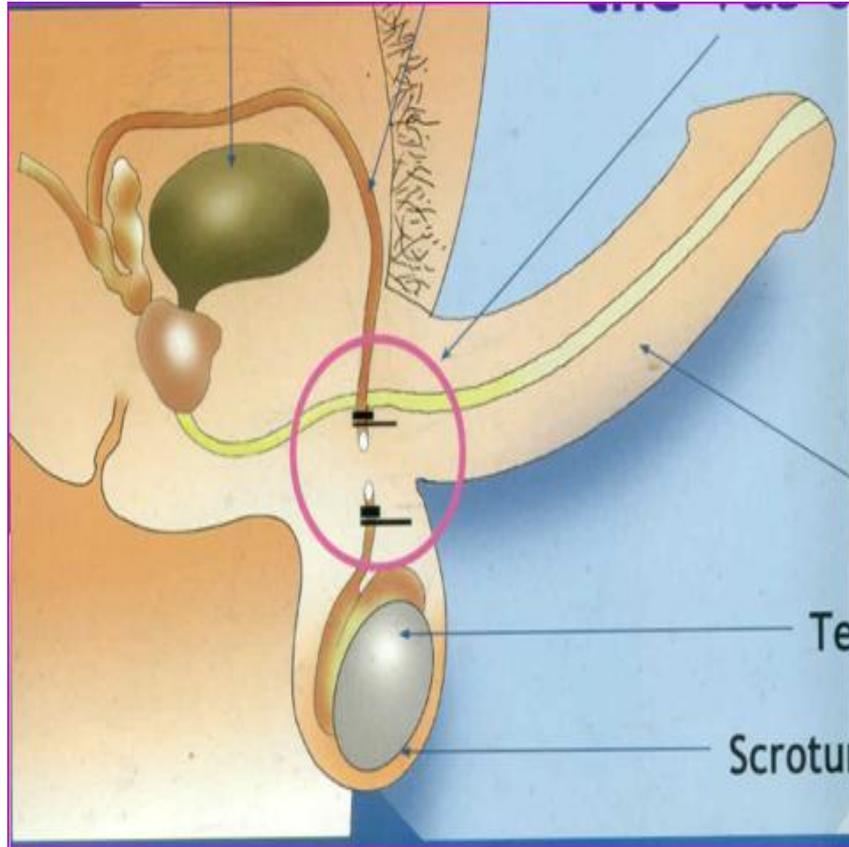


# Q: Can I have a pregnancy outside the womb (ectopic pregnancy) after ligation?

Answer: NO

- ❑ After ligation women face less risk of having an ectopic pregnancy than women who have not had ligation.





# VASECTOMY

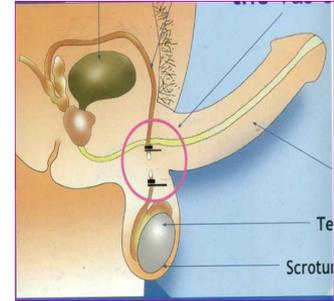


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# Q: Is vasectomy a very painful procedure that causes sperm retention, leading to complications?

## Answer: NO

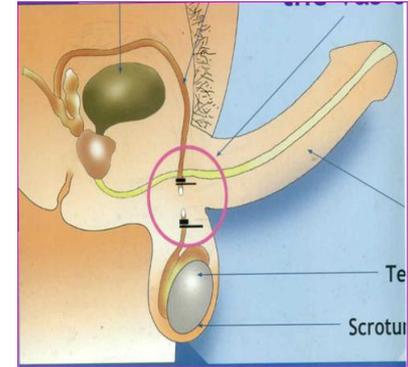
- ❑ Male sterilization is a safe and simple procedure.
- ❑ Discomfort in the scrotum area and swelling are minor and can be treated with cold compresses and non-aspirin pain relievers. It usually lasts for 2-3 days and then completely disappears.
- ❑ A small incision is only made at the side of scrotum. Sperm that are not ejaculated gets absorbed by the body, so there is no sickness that results from that.



# Q: Is vasectomy the same as castration?

Answer: NO

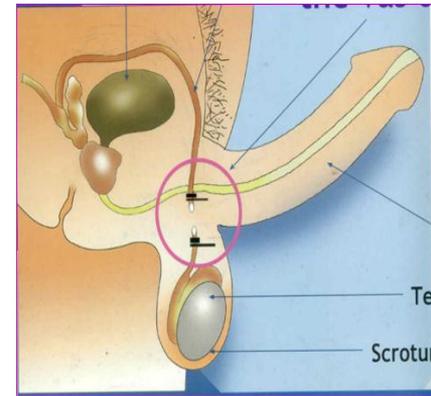
- Vasectomy is a simple procedure in which each canals deferens is either blocked or cut so that sperm cannot enter semen.
- It is not the same as castration, and the procedure of vasectomy is not to amputate or mutilate the male genitals.
- Castration is only for animals



# Q: Will vasectomy cause me to become less macho or make me effeminate?

Answer: NO

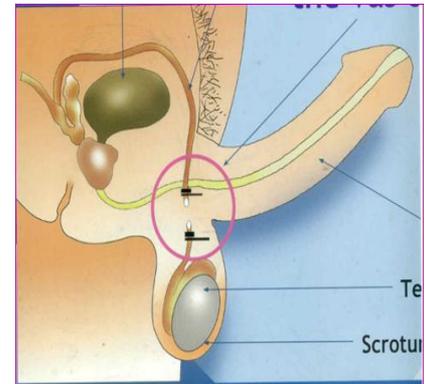
- Vasectomy does not make a man less macho or make him effeminate.
- It does not interfere with any normal body function, nor cause other types of changes.
- It does not involve removal of the testes thus, a man will continue to produce male hormones.



**Q: Will the sperm accumulate in the scrotum and cause it to burst or cause other problems?**

**Answer: NO**

- The body absorbs sperm that are not ejaculated.
- Sperm cannot accumulate in the scrotum nor cause the scrotum to burst or harm the body in any way.



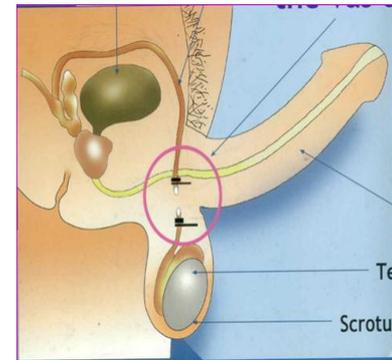
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# Q: Does vasectomy cause cancer?

Answer: NO

- ❑ Clinical studies indicate that vasectomy does not cause prostate cancer or cancer of the testicles or any other long-term problems.
- ❑ Unused sperm do not get rotten and cause cancer because it is absorbed by the body.



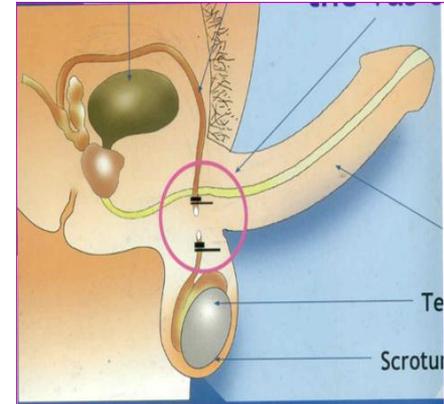
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# Q: Can vasectomy cause heart problems, harm the immune system or cause impotence?

## Answer: NO

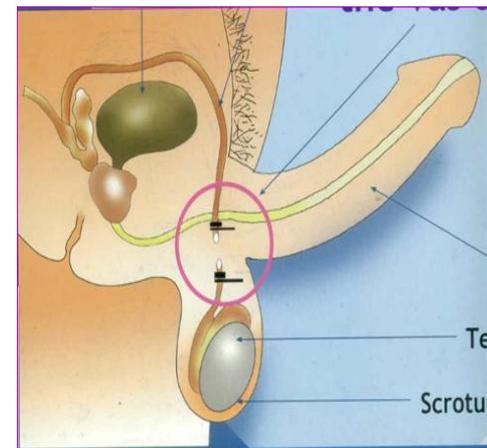
- ❑ There is no evidence that vasectomy increase the risk of cardiovascular disease or immune system problems.
- ❑ It does not affect sexual drive, nor does it affect a man's ability to get an erection, have sex or ejaculation.
- ❑ It will not impair sexual function and sexual pleasure.



# Q: Can I still perform physical labor after undergoing vasectomy?

## Answer: YES

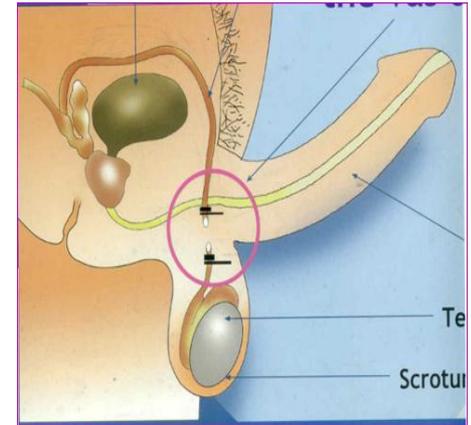
- ❑ Vasectomy has no effect on a man's overall health and physical ability. He will look the same and feel the same as before.
- ❑ After a recovery period of 2-5 days, he can return to his normal physical activities.
- ❑ The operation will not cause the man to lose strength, so he can work as hard as before.
- ❑ It will not cause weight gain, hair loss or impair mental function.

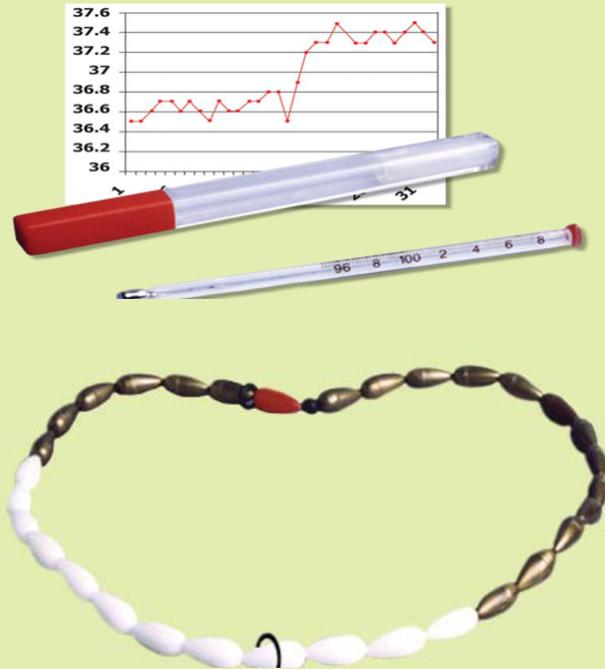


# Q: Can it be reversed and allow men to become fertile again?

Answer: NO

- ❑ Vasectomy is intended to be permanent. People who may want more children should choose a different family planning method.





# NFP

CYCLE DAY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Month/January Date	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Symbol	R	R	R	S	S	D	D	D	D	D	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
What do you feel?	W	W	W	S	S	D	D	D	D	D	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
What is seen?	0000	0000	0000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000	000000
Inter-course						♥		♥		♥																				
Medication Taken /Fever																														

# Q: Are NFP methods effective in preventing pregnancy?

Answer: YES

- ❑ NFP methods can be effective if practiced correctly and consistently.
- ❑ In a study of Lactation Amenorrhea Method in the Philippines, only 2% of women who used the method correctly and consistently became pregnant in a year.
- ❑ .....for cervical mucus method, only 3 % of women who used the method correctly and consistently became pregnant in 1 year.



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# Q: Is modern NFP only for highly educated couples?

Answer: No

- ❑ Studies show that couples worldwide, whatever their economic or educational status can use NFP methods successfully if they are properly trained and highly motivated.



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# Q: Is NFP too complicated to be used by most couples?

## Answer: NO

- ❑ Anyone who is taught by a certified/trained health service provider and motivated to use NFP can do so.
- ❑ The methods are simple that they have been successfully adapted to suit the needs of cultures all around the world.



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# Q: Is it true that only women with regular menstrual cycle can use modern NFP?

Answer: NO

- ❑ Studies show that most women, regardless of cycle regularity, can use of modern NFP methods as long as they can correctly identify their fertile periods.



# Q: Can most men accept abstinence during a woman's fertile period?

Answer: YES

- ❑ Studies show that for most couples who choose to practice modern NFP, the men reported that they were not particularly bothered by the required abstinence during their partner's fertile period.



# Q: Is withdrawal a modern NFP method?

Answer: NO

- ❑ Withdrawal or coitus interruptus is not a modern NFP method.
- ❑ Withdrawal is not that effective and may make sexual union less satisfactory for the couple.



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# Q: Is rhythm/calendar method a modern NFP method?

Answer: NO

- ❑ It is considered a traditional method of family planning & therefore not being recommended for couples to use.
- ❑ The rhythm method involves counting the days before and after menstruation to predict a woman's fertile period.



# Q: Is it true that SDM works well for all women?

## Answer:

- ❑ Approximately, 50-60% of all women have 26 and 32 days long cycle.
- ❑ Women who have cycles shorter than 26 days or longer than 32 days are not good candidates for SDM.
- ❑ Also, women who would not be able to avoid sex on the days they might get pregnant are not likely to be successful using this method.



# Q: Can women predict ovulation thru basal body temperature?

## Answer:

- You cannot determine from BBT ahead of time whether you are about to ovulate or not; it will only tell you when you have ovulated.
- There is sometimes a drop in temperature on the day of ovulation, but whether it was really ovulation or not can only be determined after the temperature has gone up and stayed up typically for several days.



**Q: Will exclusive breastfeeding protect against unwanted pregnancy as long as women continue breastfeeding their child?**

## **Answer:**

- Research has proven that LAM will only work if...
  1. Woman's menstrual bleeding has not returned since her baby was born; and
  2. The baby is exclusively breastfed; and
  3. The baby is less than six months old.



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# Q: Will exclusive breastfeeding protect against unwanted pregnancy as long as women continue breastfeeding their child?

## Continued..

- ❑ The effectiveness of LAM depends on exclusive breastfeeding. This means as often as the baby is hungry “on demand,” day and night with no long intervals between feeds.
- ❑ Even if a woman expresses breast milk, if she is separated from her baby by more than a few hours, she cannot expect a high level of contraceptive protection.
- ❑ The infant's suckling triggers a signal to the mother’s brain that interferes with the production of the hormones needed for ovulation. Ovulation is necessary for pregnancy to occur.



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