



DOWN SYNDROME PROGRAM  
[www.massgeneral.org/downsyndrome](http://www.massgeneral.org/downsyndrome)

## Choosing Birth Control That Works for You

**Birth control can help treat heavy or painful periods. It can also help you control when and if you want to get pregnant. In this handout, you will learn about the different types of birth control that are available to you. You will also learn how your doctor can help you find a type of birth control that works for you.**

### WHAT IS BIRTH CONTROL?

**Birth control** is a type of medicine that can help treat heavy or painful periods. It can also help you control when and if you want to get pregnant.

### WHY MIGHT I THINK ABOUT STARTING BIRTH CONTROL?

Everyone has a different reason for wanting to start birth control. Here are some common reasons:

- You have a lot of pain with your period.
- You have very heavy periods.
- Your period lasts longer than 7 days.
- You want to control when your period happens.
- You do not want to get pregnant right now.
- You do not want to get pregnant in the future.

### WHO CAN I TALK TO IF I WANT TO START BIRTH CONTROL OR ASK QUESTIONS?

You can talk with your doctor if you want to start birth control or if you have questions.

### WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BIRTH CONTROL?

- Your doctor.
- Birth Control Options handout from MGHfC:

[www.massgeneralforchildren.org/birth-control-options](http://www.massgeneralforchildren.org/birth-control-options)

- Planned Parenthood®  
[www.plannedparenthood.org](http://www.plannedparenthood.org)
- Bedsider®  
[www.bedsider.org](http://www.bedsider.org)

### HOW DO I DECIDE WHICH TYPE OF BIRTH CONTROL IS RIGHT FOR ME?

You can talk with your doctor about the different types of birth control.

There are many types of birth control available to you. The type you choose depends on how often you want to take it. It also depends on the type you think will work best for you.

#### ***Did you know?***

Birth control can make your blood more likely to **clot**, or form sticky clumps. People who have Down syndrome are a little more likely to develop blood clots.

If you want to start birth control, ask your doctor if you need to be careful about developing blood clots.

## TYPES OF BIRTH CONTROL

The chart below shows the different types of birth control that might be available to you. Ask your doctor which of these types are right for you.

Type of birth control	How does it work?	How long does it work?
Birth control pill	Take 1 pill every day by mouth at the same time every day.	1 day
Patch	Place a thin sticker on your skin.	1 month
Intrauterine device <i>Also called Mirena® or Skyla®</i>	A doctor places a small, T-shaped piece of plastic or metal inside of your vagina.	3-6 years
Injection <i>Also called Depo Provera®</i>	A doctor gives you an injection around the same time every 3 months	3 months
Vaginal ring <i>Also called NuvaRing®</i>	Place a small plastic ring inside your vagina	1 month
Implant <i>Also called Nexplanon®</i>	A doctor puts a small plastic stick in your upper arm.	3 years

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