Non-Prescription Birth Control Methods

Method	How to Use	Things to Know		How well does it work?*
Breast/Chest feeding Lactation Amenorrhea Method (LAM)	 Nurse at least every 4 hours during the day Nurse at least every 6 hours during the night Breast/chestfeeding only— no bottles, formula, or food Works only until: You get your first period OR Six months after childbirth (whichever comes first) 	 Effective only if breast/chestfeeding: can't use formula or baby food Requires breast/chestfeeding often Only works if you haven't gotten a period after giving birth Once you begin nursing, it starts preventing pregnancy right away Reduces bleeding after giving birth Does not protect against HIV or other STIs 		98%
Condom (External) (Latex or Polyurethane)	 Put on a condom when the penis is erect Use a new condom each time you have sex After sex, pull out before penis gets soft while holding onto the condom's rim Use a polyurethane condom if you are allergic to latex 	 Can buy at many stores or online Can put on as part of sex play/ foreplay Can help prevent early ejaculation Can be used for vaginal, oral, and anal sex Protects against HIV and other STIs 	 May decrease penile sensation May break or slip off Can add lube to the outside of the condom after it is on the penis to make sex feel even better and prevent condoms from breaking 	87%
Condom (Internal) (Polyurethane)	 Use a new condom each time you have sex Use extra lubrication as needed Do not use an internal condom at the same time as an external condom. 	 Can put in as part of sex play/ foreplay Can be used for anal and vaginal sex Good for people with latex allergy Protects against HIV and other STIs May decrease pleasure with sex. May be noisy 	 May be hard to insert May slip out of place during sex Can get it in stores, pharmacies, some health centers, and online. Should not be used at the same time as an external condom 	79%
Emergency Contraception Pills Progestin EC (Plan B One-Step® and others)	 Works best the sooner you take it after unprotected sex EC pills can work up to 5 days (120 hours) after unprotected sex If pack contains 2 pills, take both together 	 Available at pharmacies, health centers, or from your clinician Also available through telehealth platforms and on college campuses and other public places You can get progestin EC without a prescription, no matter how old you are. May cause stomach upset or nausea Progestin EC does not interact with testosterone. 	 Cost varies Does not protect against HIV or other STIs Progestin EC pills do not work as well if your BMI is over 25 Ulipristal acetate EC pills require a prescription EC pills don't work to end a pregnancy. They lower your chance of getting pregnant after unprotected sex. You may want to take a pregnancy test 2-3 weeks after you've taken the pills to make sure they worked. 	The sooner you take the pills, the better they work.

Method	How to Use	Things to Know	How well does it work?*
Fertility Awareness Natural Family Planning	 Predict fertile days by: taking temperature daily before getting out of bed in the morning checking vaginal mucus for changes; AND/OR keeping a record of your monthly bleeding It works best if you use more than one of these methods Avoid sex or use a back-up method (like condoms) during fertile days 	 Costs little Can help with avoiding or trying to become pregnant Use a back-up method on fertile days This method requires a lot of effort Does not work well if your monthly bleeding is irregular Does not protect against HIV or other STIs 	85%
Progestin- Only Pills	• Take the pill daily	 Opill is the only brand you can buy online and in stores You can become pregnant right after stopping the pills It may lower the risk of uterine lining cancer Safe to use while breast/chestfeeding Great option for people who prefer to avoid estrogen-containing methods May cause changes in your periods. Does not protect against HIV or other STIs 	93%
Spermicide Cream, gel, sponge, foam, inserts, film	 Insert spermicide deep into vagina shortly before sex Insert spermicide each time you have penis-in-vagina sex May use with condoms (to protect against HIV and STIS) 	 Can buy at many stores Can be put in as a part of sex play/foreplay Comes in many forms: cream, gel, sponge, foam, inserts, film May irritate vagina, penis Cream, gel, and foam can be messy When used without condoms, it does not protect against HIV or other STIs, may raise the risk of getting HIV Safe to use while breast/chestfeeding 	72%
Withdrawal Pull-out *Typical Use	• Pull penis out of vagina before ejaculation (that is, before coming)	 Costs nothing Less pleasure for some Does not work if penis is not pulled out in time Must interrupt sex Does not protect against HIV or other STIs 	80%