

Can breastfeeding be used as a method of contraception?

Yes. Breastfeeding can be used as a method of contraception but only if you follow these rules:

1. Your monthly periods have not returned.
2. Your baby is fully or nearly fully breastfed.
 - Fully breastfed means your baby gets all food from suckling at the breast.
 - Nearly fully breastfed means, in addition to breastfeeding, vitamins, minerals, juice, water or any other foods are given infrequently (no more than 1 or 2 mouthfuls a day).
 - To be fully breastfed or nearly fully breastfed, your baby should be breastfed at least every 4 hours and not have more than one 6 hour stretch between breastfeeding in 24 hours.
3. Your baby is less than 6 months old.

This method of contraception is called Lactational Amenorrhea Method.

L = Lactational means breastfeeding

A = Amenorrhea means having no monthly period

M = Method

Can I use the Lactational Amenorrhea Method (LAM)?

If you answer "YES" to all of the four rules below, LAM may be a good method for you to use:

1. My monthly period has not returned.
2. My baby is fully or nearly fully breastfed.
3. I am breastfeeding often, at least every 4 hours, and not going longer than one 6 hour stretch between breastfeeding in a 24 hour period.
4. My baby is less than 6 months old.



If you answer "NO" to any of these statements, begin another method of contraception. Keep breastfeeding as often as you can for your baby's health.

To use LAM effectively, you need additional detailed information. For more information on LAM and other methods of contraception, call:

Family HEALTHline

705-743-1000

TTY line 743-4700

www.pcchu.ca

Peterborough County-City Health Unit

Breastfeeding and Contraception (Birth Control)



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If you are breastfeeding and don't want to get pregnant, here are your options:

METHOD	EFFECT ON BREASTFEEDING
Breastfeeding as Contraception, or LAM (Lactational Amenorrhea Method) * Effective only if: 1. Your monthly periods have not returned. 2. Your baby is fully or nearly fully breastfed. 3. Your baby is less than 6 months old.	Positive effect on breastfeeding
Condoms (Male) Thin covering of latex (or polyurethane) that is rolled onto the erect penis to stop sperm from going into the vagina.	None
Condoms (Female) Polyurethane sheath that lines the vagina to stop sperm from going into the vagina.	None
Spermicides (Foam, Gel, Film, Sponge) All contain chemicals that kill sperm. These methods are inserted into the vagina before intercourse.	None
Diaphragm and Spermicide, Cap and Spermicide Rubber barriers that are placed inside the vagina before intercourse to cover the cervix and prevent sperm from entering the uterus.	None
IUD (Intra-Uterine Device) A small piece of plastic, usually wrapped with copper that is inserted into the uterus by a health care provider. It usually works by preventing sperm from reaching an egg.	None
IUD (Intra-Uterine Device) with Hormone A small piece of plastic containing a hormone (progestin), that thickens cervical mucus, prevents sperm from reaching an egg and may stop an egg from being released. A health care provider inserts this into the uterus.	No proven effect on infant from hormone. No adverse effects on breast milk supply if breast milk supply is well established.
Fertility Awareness Methods These methods require special teaching and are difficult to use before your periods start again.	None
Combined hormonal contraceptive methods (Birth Control Pill, Contraceptive Patch, Vaginal Contraceptive Ring) Contain hormones (progestin and estrogen) that stop an egg from being released each month and thicken cervical mucus. These methods are either taken orally ("the Pill"), worn on the skin ("the Patch") or inserted into the vagina ("the Ring").	No proven effect on infant from hormones. Studies have shown that estrogen reduces breast milk supply.
Mini Pill A pill containing progestin, which is a hormone that thickens cervical mucus and may stop an egg from being released.	No proven effect on infant from hormone. No adverse effects on breast milk supply if breast milk supply is well established.
Injectables (Depo Provera) A hormone injection given by a health care provider every three months. It contains progestin, which thickens cervical mucus and may stop ovulation.	No proven effect on infant from hormone. No adverse effects on breast milk supply if breast milk supply is well established.
Vasectomy (Male Sterilization) A doctor cuts the tubes that carry sperm from the testicles. This may be done in a doctor's office. This is a permanent method.	None
Tubal Occlusion (Female Sterilization) A doctor cuts or blocks the tubes that carry the eggs to the uterus. This is done in a hospital and is a permanent method.	None
Emergency Contraceptive Pills (ECP) You must take these pills (containing progestin) as soon as possible and within 5 days of unprotected sex. This is an emergency method.	No proven effect on infant from hormones. No adverse effects on breast milk supply.
Withdrawal The man pulls the penis out of the vagina before ejaculation.	None

* For more details, please see back of brochure