

Sexual Health

WITHDRAWAL METHOD



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The Withdrawal Method of birth control is when the man withdraws his penis out of the woman before he ejaculates. It is 73 – 96% effective in preventing pregnancy, when the technique is performed perfectly. Effectiveness rates depend heavily on proper technique.

The Withdrawal Method does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STI).

Considerations

- If no other method of birth control is available, it is better than using nothing.
- It is free and accessible to anyone.
- Requires self control and an ability to anticipate orgasm and ejaculation on the part of the male.
- Requires interruption of sex play which can be frustrating for both people.
- It is not a very reliable method; therefore you and your partner should be able to live with a certain risk of pregnancy.
- The clear fluid (pre-ejaculate) left in the vagina from the tip of the penis prior to ejaculation may contain sperm. Pre-ejaculate could cause a pregnancy and transmit a sexually transmitted infection.
- You should also consider STI and HIV testing.

If you used the Withdrawal Method and are concerned about pregnancy, you could use the Emergency Contraceptive Pill up to 72 hours after intercourse. It is available at most pharmacies and health units.

Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Protection

The Withdrawal Method does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STI).

Adapted with permission from the Middlesex London Health Unit.