



1 Use the method in any circumstance

2 Generally use the method



3 Use of the method not usually recommended unless other, more appropriate methods are not available or acceptable

4 Method NOT to be used

WHO Medical Eligibility Criteria Wheel for contraceptive use

This wheel contains medical eligibility criteria for starting use of selected contraceptive methods. It is based on WHO's guideline *Medical Eligibility Criteria for Contraceptive Use*, 3rd edition, 2004.



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**Conditions that are
category 1 and 2 for all methods (method can be used)**

Age 18–39	High risk for HIV	Schistosomiasis (bilharzia)
Anaemias, including sickle-cell disease and thalassaemia	History of gestational diabetes	Surgery without prolonged immobilization
Benign ovarian tumors, including cysts	History of high blood pressure during pregnancy	Taking antibiotics (excluding rifampicin) or griseofulvin
Breast disease: family history, benign breast disease and undiagnosed mass	History of pelvic surgery, including caesarean section	Thyroid disorders
Depression	Irregular, heavy or prolonged menstrual bleeding	Tuberculosis (but if pelvic, cannot use IUD)
Dysmenorrhoea	Malaria	Uncomplicated valvular heart disease
Endometriosis	Past ectopic pregnancy	Varicose veins
Epilepsy	Post-abortion (no sepsis)	Viral hepatitis (not active)

Notes to the conditions

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|---|---|
| A Can insert copper IUD < 48 hrs after delivery or > 4 weeks. | L Risk factors include: older age, smoking, diabetes, hypertension. |
| B If she had no subsequent pregnancy, IUD = 2. | M To check if migraine has aura, ask: "Do you see a bright spot in your vision before bad headaches?" |
| C Or other forms of purulent cervicitis. | N Migraine without aura and < 35 years old, COCs and CICs = 2.
Migraine without aura and ≥ 35 years old, COCs and CICs = 3. |
| D If she develops this condition while using the IUD, she can keep using it during treatment. | O For complicated diabetes, or having diabetes for more than 20 years, COCs, CICs, DMPA and NET-EN = 3–4. |
| E If at increased risk of STIs or HIV, advise condom use. | P COCs = 3, CICs = 2. |
| F If very high likelihood of exposure to gonorrhoea or chlamydia = 3. | Q Phenytoin, carbamazepine, barbiturates, primidone, topiramate, oxcarbazepine. |
| G If on ARV Therapy = 2. | R If she is not clinically well, IUD = 3. |
| H AIDS, but not clinically well on ARV Therapy = 3 for insertion. | S If the uterine cavity is distorted, cannot use IUD. |
| I COCs and heavy smoking = 4. CICs and light smoking = 2. | T > 45 yrs. = 2. |
| J If blood pressure cannot be measured, and she has no known history of hypertension, all methods can be used. | |
| K The same category applies to controlled hypertension. | |

Developed in collaboration with:



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