Before Pregnancy Begins

Compare how contraceptive methods work and when they are used.

HAP.8.5 "Evaluate and communicate information about various contraceptive methods to prevent fertilization and/or implantation."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the main biological action of each method, circle each timing or use requirement, and number each mention of STI protection or its absence. Use your marks to compare which methods fit different needs.

Which Method Fits?

1. At a school health fair, a student asks how pregnancy can be prevented before it begins. Fertilization happens when a sperm joins an egg, usually in a fallopian tube. Implantation happens later, when an early embryo attaches to the lining of the uterus. Contraceptive methods act at different points in this sequence. External condoms form a barrier that keeps sperm from entering the vagina when used correctly throughout sex. They also lower the risk of many sexually transmitted infections, or STIs. A condom can break or slip, so correct use matters. No method discussed here ends an established pregnancy.

2. A daily combination pill contains hormones that usually stop the release of an egg, called ovulation. It also thickens cervical mucus, making sperm movement harder. The pill must be taken on schedule, and it does not protect against STIs. A copper intrauterine device, or IUD, is placed in the uterus by a clinician. Copper interferes with sperm movement and function, so sperm are much less likely to fertilize an egg. It can work for years without daily action, but it does not protect against STIs. Both methods mainly prevent fertilization rather than interrupt an established pregnancy.

3. After unprotected sex, timing changes the options. A levonorgestrel emergency contraception pill works mainly by delaying or preventing ovulation. It works best when taken as soon as possible and may not work if ovulation has already occurred. A copper IUD can also be placed within five days after unprotected sex as emergency contraception, and it can then provide ongoing contraception. Evidence shows its principal action is preventing fertilization. It is not used to end an established pregnancy. When comparing methods, ask what biological step each affects, whether timing or ongoing use matters, and whether STI protection is needed.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. A visitor wants a method that also lowers STI risk. Which method in the passage best fits, and what is one limitation?

2. A visitor often forgets daily tasks and wants pregnancy prevention that can last for years. Which method fits, and how does it prevent fertilization?

3. Why might a levonorgestrel emergency contraception pill not work if ovulation has already occurred?

4. A classmate claims that the combination pill and copper IUD mainly stop implantation. Evaluate the claim using one fact about each method.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a short response to a health-fair visitor who wants ongoing pregnancy prevention and lower STI risk but often forgets daily tasks. Recommend a plan using methods in the passage, explain how each works, and name one limitation.

ANSWER KEY

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the main biological action of each method, circle each timing or use requirement, and number each mention of STI protection or its absence. Use your marks to compare which methods fit different needs. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	A visitor wants a method that also lowers STI risk. Which method in the passage best fits, and what is one limitation?	**An external condom lowers the risk of many STIs, but it can break or slip and must be used correctly throughout sex.**
2	A visitor often forgets daily tasks and wants pregnancy prevention that can last for years. Which method fits, and how does it prevent fertilization?	**A copper IUD works for years without daily action. Copper interferes with sperm movement and function, making fertilization much less likely.**
3	Why might a levonorgestrel emergency contraception pill not work if ovulation has already occurred?	**Its main action is delaying or preventing ovulation, so it may not work after the egg has already been released.**
4	A classmate claims that the combination pill and copper IUD mainly stop implantation. Evaluate the claim using one fact about each method.	**The claim is incorrect. The pill usually stops ovulation, while the copper IUD interferes with sperm, so both mainly act before fertilization.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Consider a copper IUD for ongoing pregnancy prevention and external condoms to lower STI risk. The IUD interferes with sperm, making fertilization much less likely, and it does not require daily action. Condoms form a barrier that keeps sperm from entering the vagina and lower the risk of many STIs. The IUD does not protect against STIs, and condoms can break or slip.

Accept other passage-supported plans that address both ongoing pregnancy prevention and STI risk. Responses should accurately explain each recommended method and identify a real limitation.