When choosing a method of birth control, it’s important to consider your lifestyle, your period, your health conditions and if/when you’d like to have children.

If you do not want to be pregnant in the next few years, then perhaps a LARC method is the right method for you...

### Long-Acting and Reversible Contraception (LARC)

- **Paragard Intrauterine Device (IUD)**
  - This method does not have hormones and is 99% effective.
  - It is placed by a doctor in the uterus and lasts for 12 years!

- **Mirena Intrauterine System (IUS)**
  - This method has hormones and is 99% effective.
  - It is placed by a doctor in the uterus and lasts for 7 years!

- **Implant or “Rod”**
  - This method has hormones and is over 99% effective.
  - It is placed by a doctor under the skin in the arm and lasts for 3 years!

Other reliable options include... *(more info on the back)*
Long-Acting and Reversible Contraception (LARC)

Paragard Intrauterine Device (IUD)
This non-hormonal method uses copper as a natural spermicide. It must be inserted and removed by a doctor. It is 99% effective. It may be left inside the uterus for up to 12 years. The Paragard can be used while breastfeeding and fertility returns immediately after removal. When someone uses the Paragard, periods will come regularly. They may be heavier or more painful. Rarely, the IUD can migrate or expel itself from the uterus.

Mirena Intrauterine System (IUS)
This hormonal method uses progestin to prevent pregnancy. It must be inserted and removed by a doctor. It is 99% effective. It may be left inside the uterus for up to 7 years. The Mirena can be used while breastfeeding and fertility returns soon after removal. When someone uses the Mirena, they can expect shorter, lighter periods, or no periods at all. Rarely, the IUS can migrate or expel itself from the uterus.

Implant or “Rod”
This hormonal method uses progestin to prevent pregnancy. It must be inserted and removed by a doctor. It is over 99% effective. It may be left under the skin in the arm for up to 3 years. The Implant can be used while breastfeeding and fertility returns soon after removal. When someone uses the Implant, they can expect irregular periods. Many women often stop having a period after one year of use.

Short-Acting and Reversible Contraception

Combined Methods (Pill, Patch, Nuva ring)
These methods are used monthly, weekly or daily. They contain 2 types of hormones, estrogen and progestin. Someone who uses these methods will go one week per month without using medicine, at which point they will experience bleeding like a period. In general, they are about 92-99% effective, depending on use. These methods may cause side effects such as nausea, weight gain, headaches, skin changes, or a change in sex drive.

Depo Provera Shot
The shot is given every three months by a nurse. This method can be used while breastfeeding. It may cause spotting, no period, or increased bleeding. It also may cause weight gain, depression, hair or skin changes, and a change in sex drive.

Barrier Methods (Male Condom and Internal Condom)
Barrier methods can be worn on the penis or inside the vagina. Use a new one of these each time you have sex. They are made from latex or polyurethane. They can be found at many stores or at your doctor’s office. They can be put on as part of sex play or foreplay. They protect against HIV and many forms of STIs as well as pregnancy.

Emergency Contraception (Plan B)
This pill works best the sooner you take it after unprotected sex. It can be taken up to 5 days after unprotected sex. It is available at the pharmacy, without a prescription, for those 17 and older. You may also get it at your doctor’s office. It can be used while breastfeeding. It will prevent a pregnancy from starting but it will not harm an existing pregnancy.

CHA Family Planning Department supports you in all your reproductive health needs. If you are interested in starting a method of birth control, please call your doctor or visit a Family Planning Counselor.

Cambridge Sites:
East Cambridge Health Center 617-665-3000
Cambridge Women’s Health Center 617-665-2800
Cambridge Pediatrics 617-665-1264
Windsor Street Health Center 617-665-3600

Somerville Sites
Broadway Health Center 617-284-7000
Teen Connection 617-575-5690

Revere Sites:
Revere Family Health 781-485-8222

Everett Sites:
Everett Family Health 617-394-7702
Everett Teen Health Center 617-843-0700

Malden Sites:
Malden Family Medicine Center 781-338-0500