

Birth Control in Solid Organ Transplant

Transplant does not decrease the chance of getting pregnant. However, transplant patients have a higher risk of complications. Steps should be taken to prevent unplanned pregnancy. We recommend birth control.

Birth Control

See the next page for birth control options.

Hormonal birth control is more effective than barrier methods at preventing pregnancy. Barrier methods help protect against STI's. One of each method should be used.

Withdrawal and natural methods have high failure rates. They are not recommended.

Many hormonal birth control options interact with transplant medicines. Talk to the transplant team when starting or changing birth control.

No method is 100% effective. The only fully effective method of not getting pregnant is no sex. Emergency birth control is safe to use for transplant patients. Notify the transplant team if this is needed.

Mycophenolate

This is one of the medicines your child may be on. This is harmful to a developing baby. Your child may be on this medicine for life. It is important to know the risks such as:

- Higher risk of losing a pregnancy (miscarriage)
- Higher risk of a baby being born with birth defects such as:
 - Cleft lip or cleft palate
 - Defects of the ears, arms, legs, heart, esophagus, kidney, and nervous system

Pregnancy Prevention

We highly recommend birth control for all sexually active patients on mycophenolate.

Your child must be on birth control the entire time they are on mycophenolate.

Your child must stay on birth control for 6 weeks after they stop taking mycophenolate.

Future Pregnancy

Mycophenolate doesn't decrease your child's chance to have children in the future. Advise them to talk with their doctor and transplant team to determine a plan.

Do not tell your child to stop taking mycophenolate if they become pregnant. Tell the transplant team right away. They will advise what to do.

Steps When Starting Mycophenolate

Step 1: Read through this handout. Talk with the transplant team about any questions you may have.

Step 2: Choose a birth control option:

- Birth control is a personal choice. This varies person-to-person.
- Talk with your child's doctor or OB/GYN about the different options.
- Adolescent medicine is available to discuss the best birth control.

Step 3: Your child may need a pregnancy test before and after starting mycophenolate. This is to confirm they are not pregnant.

Hormonal Birth Control Methods			
Birth Control	Frequency	Effectiveness	Other Notes
Hormonal IUD	Every 3-12 years	99.9%	Cost effective Placed in a doctor's office
Hormone Implant	Every 3-5 years	94-99.8%	Can cause irregular or no period 1-year delay in return to fertility after stopping Placed in the arm in a doctor's office
Combined Oral Contraceptive Pill	Daily	91-99%	Not appropriate for all patients Take at the same time every day
Progestosterone Only Contraceptive Pill	Daily	91-99%	Must be taken at the same time every day Fewer side effects than the combined pill Available over the counter
Hormone Shot	Every 3 months	94-99.8%	Can cause an irregular period or no period 1-year delay in return to fertility after stopping Can decrease bone strength
Hormone Patch	Weekly (3 patches per month)	93-99%	Fewer side effects compared to the pill Need to place correctly and make sure it doesn't fall off
Vaginal Ring	Monthly	91-99%	Fewer side effects compared to the pill Needs to be placed correctly
Barrier Birth Control Methods			
Birth Control	Frequency	Effectiveness	Other Notes
Condom	Every sexual encounter	82-98%	Protect against sexually transmitted infections
Female condom	Every sexual encounter	79-95%	Should be used with another birth control method
Other Birth Control Methods			
Birth Control	Frequency	Effectiveness	Other Notes
Copper IUD	3-10 years	99.5%	Hormone free More bleeding and cramping compared to hormonal IUD

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 9/2024 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF# 8368.