

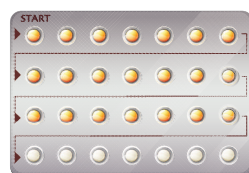
Contraceptive methods used by athletes reflect those of the general community.

CONTRACEPTION

Types Of Contraception

Different athletes may choose one form of contraception over another for reasons such as perceived health risks, weight gain, and possible negative effects of performance.

Oral Contraceptive Pill (OCP)



Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly effective/convenient/reversible May decrease menstrual blood loss, decreasing risk of iron deficiency anemia Reduces painful period cramps May decrease PMS, which can negatively affect training and competition Can be used to manipulate the menstrual cycle for important events and travel No long term effect on fertility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibility of breakthrough bleeding, fluid retention, weight gain, breast tenderness, and headaches (usually settles after a few months). No protection from STDs Possibility of decreased VO2 max/endurance performance Rare side effect of increased risk of blood clot development

Condom Use



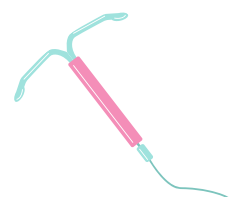
Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easily obtainable/relatively inexpensive No medical side-effects No long term effects on fertility Protection against STDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not as effective as OCP in preventing pregnancy Care and practice required for effective use Can interrupt the spontaneity of sexual intercourse May decrease sensitivity for the male partner

The Diaphragm



Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few medical side-effects No long term effect on fertility Can be inserted a few hours before intercourse Decreased risk of cervical cancer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% effective (less than pill or condom) Need for forward planning (insertion prior to intercourse is required) Requires specialist fitting for correct size Side-effects (due to irritation/allergy to rubber)

Intrauterine Contraceptive Device (IUD)



Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Provides 5-8 years of protection Overcomes problems associated with forgetting contraception Convenient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May increase menstrual flow May increase period pain Requires specialist fitting Slight increase in the risk of infection which can result in pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)

Reference: Sports Medicine Australia: Women in Sport, Fact Sheet No. 6 Contraception