

Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#70 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

How NOT to get pregnant

What You Need to Know



• Available in Spanish and Chinese: call 311 or visit nyc.gov/health
• Disponible en español: llame al 311 o visite nyc.gov/health
• 需要中文服務 - 可電 311 或造訪網址: nyc.gov/health



The two best ways to prevent pregnancy:

1. Don't have sex.

- The only way to be SURE you don't get pregnant is not to have sexual intercourse.
- You won't be the only one! More than half of public high school students say they have not had sex.
- Even if some of your friends have sex, it doesn't mean YOU have to.
- If you're not sure you're ready for sex, it's better to wait. Someone who really cares for you won't pressure you.
- You can say "no" now – even if you said "yes" before. (See "You Have the Right!")

2. Use both birth control AND condoms.

- If you are sexually active, or think you will be soon, be prepared with birth control *and* condoms.
- "The Pill" and other hormonal birth control methods are almost 100% effective when used correctly – and very safe for most teens:
 - Birth control pills
 - A patch
 - A vaginal ring
 - An injection you get every 3 months (Depo Provera)
 - An implant that lasts up to 3 years (Implanon)
 - An IUD (intrauterine device) that works for up to 5 years (Mirena) (A non-hormonal, copper IUD, Paraguard, is also available that works for up to 10 years.)
- Always use a condom, too (see BYOC = Bring Your Own Condom).

Condoms are the only birth control method that prevents HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, including chlamydia and gonorrhea.



Where to Get Birth Control

- Get birth control from your health care provider, community health center or family planning clinic.
- Call 311 or go to nyc.gov/teenhealth to find out how to get free or low-cost birth control and other confidential health services.

BYOC = Bring Your Own Condom

- Always have condoms available, just in case.
- Use one every time, no matter what kind of birth control you use.
- It is important to use condoms for both vaginal *and* anal sex. (Anal sex carries a high risk of spreading HIV.)
- Condoms prevent pregnancy AND protect against HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, including chlamydia and gonorrhea.
- Free condoms are easy to find. Here's how:
 - Visit nyc.gov/condoms or call 311.
 - Visit a Health Department clinic or a community clinic.
 - If you go to a public high school, get free condoms from your health resource room. If your school has a school-based health center, you can get free condoms there, too.
- **More information: Health Bulletin #47: NYC Condoms** (call 311 or go to nyc.gov/condoms).



Emergency contraception can prevent pregnancy after unprotected sex.

But you have to act soon!

- Emergency contraception is sometimes called the “morning-after pill.” Plan B is the brand name.
- Emergency contraception prevents pregnancy after unprotected sex, or if a condom breaks. It can also be used after forced sex (see “You Have the Right!”).
- Emergency contraception will NOT cause an abortion. If you are already pregnant, the pills won’t work.
- The sooner, the better! Emergency contraception works best when taken within 72 hours (3 days or less) after unprotected sex. The pills may still work if taken within 5 days after sex.
- For ongoing birth control, it is best to choose a hormonal method or copper IUD, and use a condom every time. Emergency contraception is not as effective as these methods for regular contraception.

Keep emergency contraception around just in case.

- Ask your health care provider for a pill-pack in advance.
- Anyone 17 or older can get emergency contraception pills over-the-counter without a prescription.
- For a list of pharmacies where emergency contraception is available over-the-counter, go to www.ec-help.org. Call ahead before you go, to make sure the pharmacy has it in stock.
- Women 16 and younger still need a prescription, but laws are changing. For up-to-date information, talk to your provider, visit your clinic, or see the “More Information and Help” section of this bulletin.

You Have the Right!

You have the right to decide if and when to have sex.

- Forced sex is rape, and rape is a crime.
- You also have the right to use birth control and condoms.
- For help and support, call the **New York City Domestic Violence Hotline: 311** or **800-621-HOPE** (800-621-4673).
- **CALL 911 IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER**

If you become pregnant, you have the right to decide what is best for you:

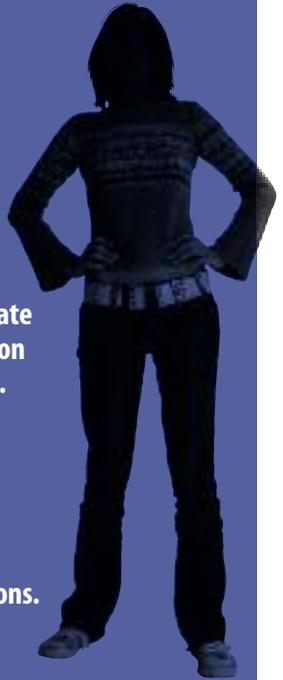
Continue the pregnancy, end the pregnancy with an abortion, or choose adoption.

You have the right to confidential services.

People 17 and younger have a legal right in New York State to get any of these health services without the permission or knowledge of their parents, guardians or anyone else.

- Birth control, including condoms.
- Emergency contraception.
- Pregnancy tests.
- HIV tests.
- Testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections.
- Pregnancy care.
- Abortion.

Free or low-cost confidential health services are available at many Health Department clinics, community health centers and family planning clinics. **Call 311** or go to nyc.gov/teenhealth to find out where.



Get Tested for Chlamydia

- Chlamydia is very common in New York City, especially among teens.
- All sexually active women who are 25 or younger should be tested for chlamydia once a year.
- Health Department clinics offer free testing and treatment for chlamydia and other sexually transmitted infections. Call 311 or visit nyc.gov/std to find out where to go.

Talk to Your Parents

- Your parents don't want to see you grow up too fast, or see you get hurt. It's their job to look out for your best interests.
- Try to talk openly with them about sex, and other things. Be ready to talk if they ask. Don't shut them out – they want to help.
- If you feel you can't talk with your parents, find an adult you trust, like an older brother or sister, a relative or a family friend. Or talk to a counselor or health care provider. Call 311 or go to nyc.gov/teenhealth to find out how.

More Information and Help

Call 311 (ask for the Women's Healthline) for information and referrals, including:

- Free or low-cost health insurance from neighborhood health care providers
- Birth control, including condoms (more information at nyc.gov/teenhealth and nyc.gov/condoms)
- Emergency contraception (you can also call 888-668-2528 or visit not-2-late.com)
- Abortion services
- Where to get free, confidential or anonymous HIV counseling and testing, and free testing and care for other sexually transmitted infections (or visit nyc.gov/std)
- Sexual assault (rape) services

Other Resources

- nyc.gov/teenhealth (New York City Health Department)
- myspace.com/nycteen-myspace
- www.teenwire.org (Planned Parenthood)

24-Hour Confidential Hotlines

- New York City Domestic Violence Hotline: 311 or 800-621-HOPE (800-621-4673)
- LifeNet (help for worries, depression, thinking about hurting yourself, alcohol and drugs, and many other problems): 311 or 800-LifeNet (800-543-3638)
- Spanish LifeNet: 311 or 877-AYUDESE (877-298-3373)
- Asian LifeNet (Mandarin, Cantonese and Korean): 311 or 877-990-8585

ALWAYS CALL 911 IN AN EMERGENCY

**DIAL
311**

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All Health Bulletins are also available at nyc.gov/health

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New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

125 Worth Street, Room 1047, CN 33
New York, N.Y. 10013

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner

Bureau of Communications

Geoffrey Cowley, Associate Commissioner

Cortnie Lowe, M.F.A., Executive Editor

Drew Blakeman, Senior Writer

Leslie Laurence, Senior Writer

Keiko Sakagami, Ed.D, C.H.E.S.

Prepared in cooperation with:

Division of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
Bureau of Maternal, Infant and Reproductive Health



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**DIAL
311**

For Non-Emergency New York City Services
Telephone Interpretation in More Than 170 Languages