

Pharmacist Procedures for Birth Control Prescribing

1

Birth Control Screening

Person comes to pharmacy requesting birth control.



Pharmacist asks individual to complete Birth Control Screening Questions.

2

Pharmacist Review

Pharmacist reviews and clarifies screening questions to determine if woman has any category 3 or 4 contraindications and marks eligible type(s) on Birth Control Menu.

"I have the screening questions that you just filled out. Please wait while I use the information to check to see which types of birth control are safe for you."

a. Medical Eligibility Criteria (MEC)

Compare screening questions for birth control to the CDC medical Eligibility Criteria.

<https://cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/contraception/mmwr/mec/summary.html>

b. Medications

Certain medications may have contraindications:

- *Antiretrovirals*: Nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, ritonavir-boosted protease inhibitors
- *Anticonvulsants*: Carbamazepine, primidone, topiramate, oxcarbazepine, lamotrigine, barbiturates, phenytoin
- *Antimicrobials/antifungals/antiparasitics*: Rifampin/rifabutin

3

Screen For Pregnancy

"If there's a chance you might be pregnant, I will not be able to start birth control for you today. The following questions help determine if a woman could possibly be pregnant."

- Did you have a baby less than 6 months ago, and are you fully or near-fully breast feeding $\geq 85\%$ of feeds, and have you had no menstrual period since the delivery?
- Have you had a baby in the last 4 weeks?
- Did you have a miscarriage or abortion in the last 7 days?
- Did your last menstrual period start within the past 7 days?
- Have you not had sex since your last period started or delivery of a baby?
- Have you been using a reliable birth control method consistently and correctly?

If YES to AT LEAST ONE, proceed to next step.

If NO to ALL, pregnancy CANNOT be ruled out. Refer to a healthcare provider and counsel on emergency contraception if has had unprotected sex in last 5 days, (see birth control menu).

4

Blood Pressure

"You also must have normal blood pressure. I'm going to check that now."

If abnormal, refer to a healthcare provider and if indicated, counsel on over-the-counter birth control options

5

General Counseling

"Before we discuss birth control methods available, I want to remind you of the following:"

a. STDs

"With the exception of condoms, none of the methods we discuss today will prevent STDs. Even if you end up deciding on a more effective birth control method, we recommend that you always use condoms as well. You can buy them here."

b. Regular Check-ups

"Coming to the pharmacy should not replace regular check-ups with your doctor, where they can get STD testing. If you do not have a doctor, the health department or other low-cost clinics can provide STD testing."

c. Pregnancy Risk

"While you may experience side effects while using birth control methods, all methods are safer than pregnancy. If you did not use birth control, you would have an 85% chance of getting pregnant. This means that out of 100 couples having sex without birth control for a year, 85 would get pregnant and 15 would not."

d. OTC Methods of Birth Control

- Condoms: *"You can always purchase condoms at a pharmacy without a prescription. Condoms are an effective way to prevent STDs."*

- Emergency Contraception (EC): *"You can also purchase some types of emergency contraception. These are hormone pills that you use up to five days after a condom breaks or you forget to use your birth control. EC works best the sooner you take it."*

6

Birth Control Menu

Show the Birth Control Menu of all the different methods, discussing methods from most effective to least effective. Highlight the methods they can use based on the Birth Control Screening Questions.

a. Estrogen Products

"Based on the screening questions you completed, you are eligible for all four types of birth control here at this pharmacy: the birth control shot, birth control pills, the vaginal ring, and the birth control patch."

OR

continued on next page »

6

Birth Control Menu (continued)

a. Progestin-only Products

"Based on the screening questions you completed, I cannot give you birth control containing estrogen today. You need to see a healthcare provider before taking estrogen products. This means you are eligible for the following types of progestin-only birth control here at the pharmacy: contraceptive shot (brand name Depo Provera), or a progestin-only pill. The IUD or implant that I previously mentioned, does not contain estrogen and may be an option for you. If you would like one of these types of birth control, you will need to see your healthcare provider."

7

Assess Preferences

"Is there any method you want to hear more about?"

"Did you have a particular method or methods in mind? If so, which one(s)?"

"What do you like when thinking about this or these methods?"

"Have you used any of these methods in the past? If so, what was your experience?"

If no preference, discuss methods from most effective to least effective, using the Birth Control Menu. Be sure to discuss long acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs)/OTC methods with all women.

Discuss LARCs (if not contraindicated)

- a. The most effective and longest-lasting methods of birth control are the birth control implant and the intrauterine device (IUD). Less than 1 out of 100 women will become pregnant in the first year of use.
- b. These methods last 3-12 years.
- c. There are very few side effects with these types of devices because they have only one hormone or no hormones. The main side effect is changes in menstrual bleeding.
- d. *"If you're interested, you will need to see a healthcare provider. I would recommend checking with your own doctor, a gynecologist, or a Title X family planning clinic. Our local Title X agency is the Indiana Family Health Council, which lists clinics at www.ifhc.org."*
- e. *"Even if you decide to see another healthcare provider about an IUD or implant, you may want a method to protect you until that visit."*

8

Method Counseling

- a. Provide detailed information on use of selected method(s), using the Contraception Fact Sheets. Give them a copy of the fact sheet to take home.
- b. Provide additional information:
 - *"If you have problems with birth control, you can return to the pharmacy or see another clinician."*
 - *"Annual visits with your healthcare provider and STD testing are still recommended."*