



**Developmental  
Disabilities  
Planning Council**

*Easy Read Edition*

# **A Self-Advocate's Guide to Safer Sex**

**Part 3: What is pregnancy? How  
can you prevent pregnancy?**

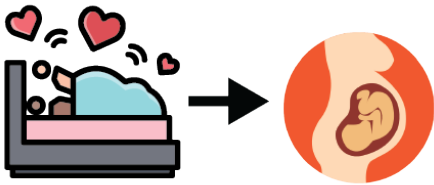
## Part 3: What is pregnancy? How can you prevent pregnancy?

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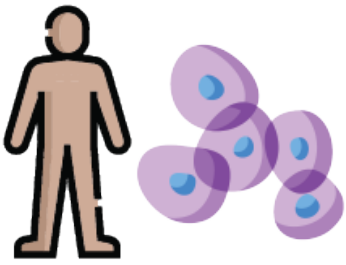
### Pregnancy Basics



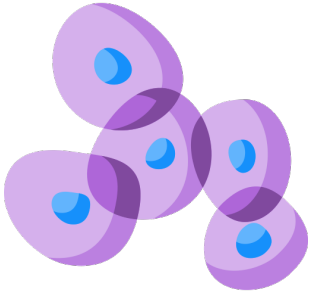
When a person is pregnant, they have a new human growing inside them.



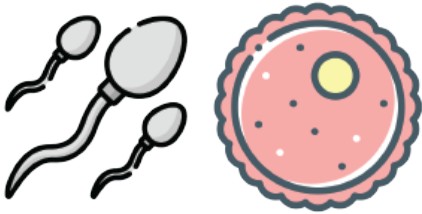
People usually get pregnant through having sex.



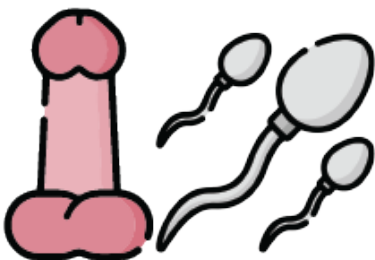
All human bodies are made of cells.



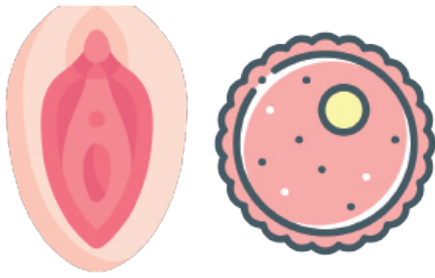
**Cells** are tiny living organisms.



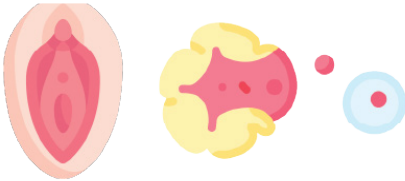
Humans produce two special types of cells that are involved in pregnancy: **sperm** and **eggs**.



People who have penises generally make sperm.



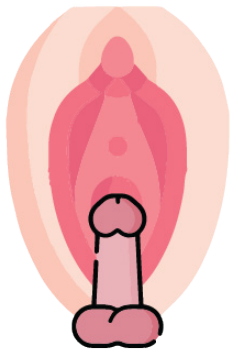
People who have vaginas generally make eggs.



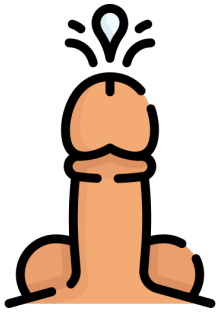
Most people with vaginas ovulate.



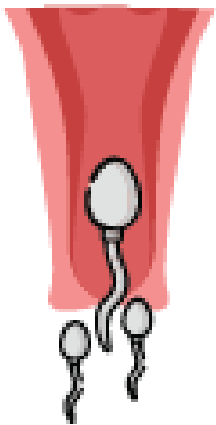
When **ovulation** happens, an egg comes out of a person's ovary and goes into their Fallopian tube.



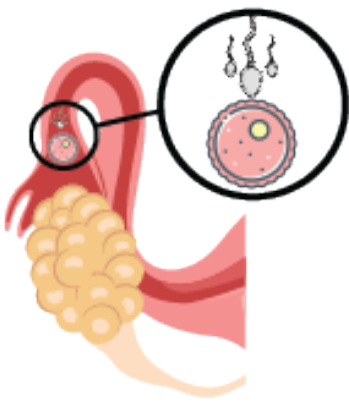
Most pregnancies happen through vaginal sex.



During sex, the person with a penis may **ejaculate**, meaning semen comes out of their penis.



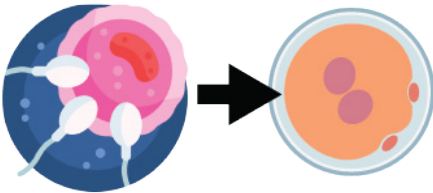
The sperm travel up the vagina, into the uterus, and into the Fallopian tube.



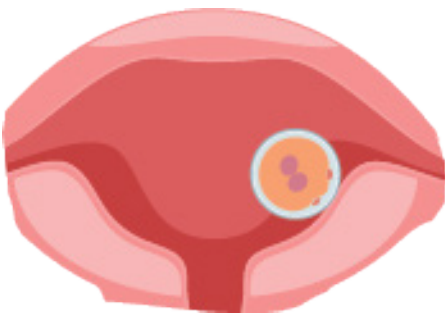
If there is an egg in one of the Fallopian tubes, a single sperm cell may meet with it.



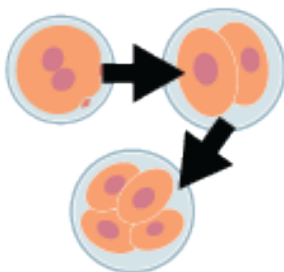
This is called **fertilization**.



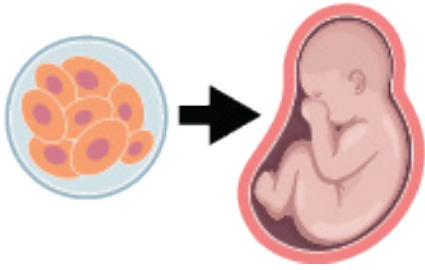
The egg and the sperm combine to make a single new cell.



This new cell will travel and attach itself to the wall of the uterus.



This cell will start making new cells.



These new cells will eventually become a new human.



The person with the vagina is now pregnant.

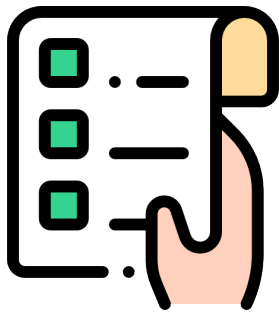
# Pregnancy Prevention



There are several ways to prevent pregnancy.



When you **prevent** something, you stop it from happening in the first place.



People want to prevent pregnancy for many reasons.



They may not want to be pregnant or have a child yet.





They may not want to be pregnant or have a child at all.



They may want to have sex without the risk of getting pregnant.



One way to prevent pregnancy is to prevent ovulation.



This happens when a person with a vagina takes medication that stops their ovaries from releasing eggs.



If there is not an egg in the Fallopian tubes, there is nothing for the sperm to fertilize.

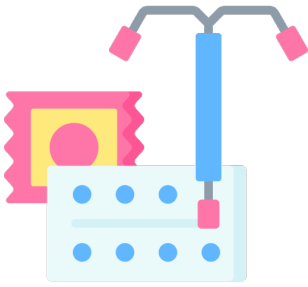


The other way to prevent pregnancy is to stop the sperm from getting to the egg.



This often happens through physically blocking the sperm from the egg.

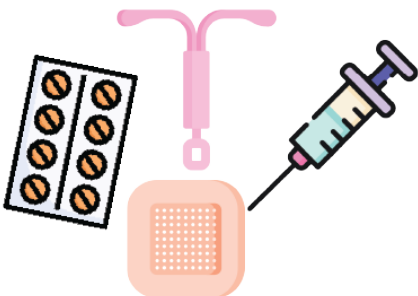
# Birth Control



**Birth control** is medication that makes it so someone cannot get pregnant as long as they keep taking it.



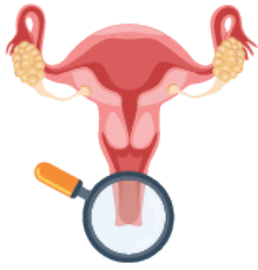
Birth control is also called “contraception.”



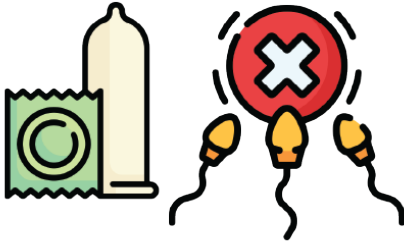
There are many different kinds of birth control.



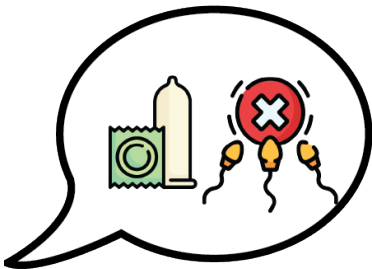
We will talk about some of the most common ones here.



**NOTE:** All the types of birth control we are going to talk about are only for people with vaginas.

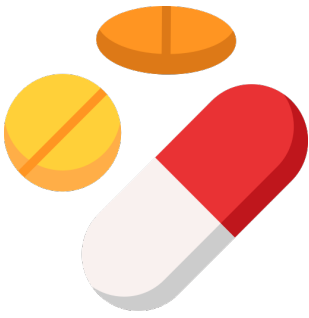


Right now, the only forms of birth control available to people with penises are condoms and sterilization.

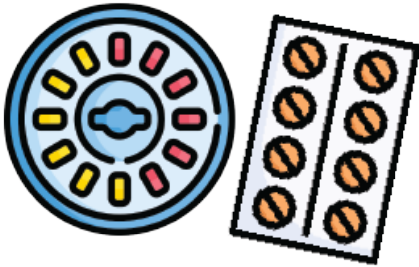


We will talk about condoms and sterilization in a later part.

## *Pills*



Birth control can come as pills, which you take by mouth.



There are many different kinds of birth control pills.



Pills work by stopping ovulation.



They also work by thickening mucus inside the body to stop sperm from getting to an egg.



Pills are very good at preventing pregnancy.

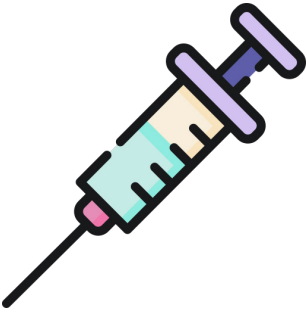


However, you have to remember to take a pill every day.



If remembering to take pills is hard for you, you might want to choose a different form of birth control.

## ***Shots***



Birth control can come as shots you get from a doctor.

**HELLO**  
my name is

**Depo-Provera**

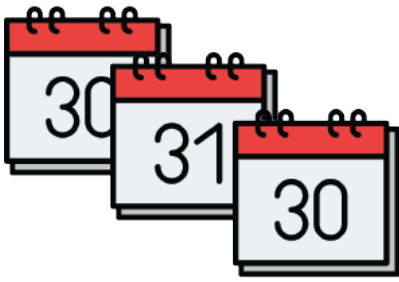
The birth control shot is also called Depo-Provera.



The shot works by stopping ovulation.



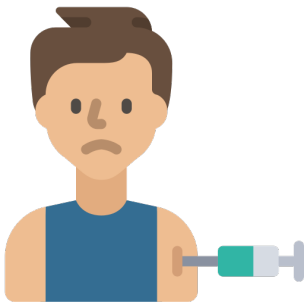
It also works by thickening mucus inside the body to stop sperm from getting to an egg.



You get the birth control shot every 3 months.



The shot is very good at preventing pregnancy.

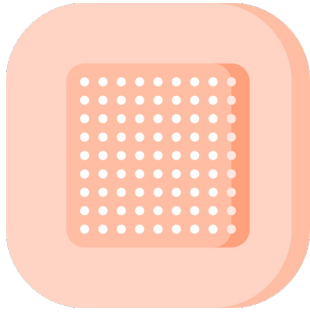


However, it does involve getting stuck with a needle.



If you are afraid of needles, you might want a different type of birth control.





## *Patches*

Birth control can come as patches that you put on your skin.



The two types of birth control patches are called Xulane and Twirla.



Patches work by stopping ovulation.



They also work by thickening mucus inside the body to stop sperm from getting to an egg.



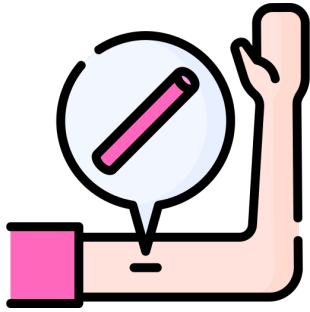
Patches are very good at preventing pregnancy.



However, you do have to remember to use a new patch each week.



If remembering to use a new patch weekly is hard for you, you might want to choose a different form of birth control.



## *Implants*

Birth control can come as a thin rod that you get implanted into your arm.



The rod is about the size of a matchstick.



The birth control implant is also called Nexplanon.



The implant works by stopping ovulation.



It also works by thickening mucus inside the body to stop sperm from getting to an egg.

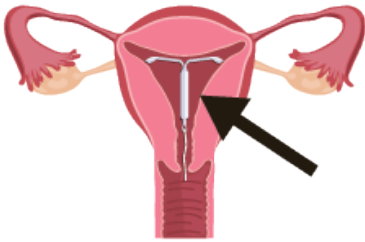


Once the implant is in your arm, it lasts for about 5 years.

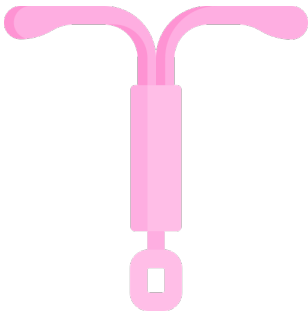


The implant is very good at preventing pregnancy.

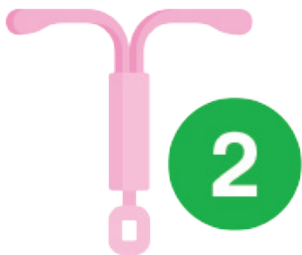
## *IUDs*



Birth control can come as a small device that goes inside your uterus.



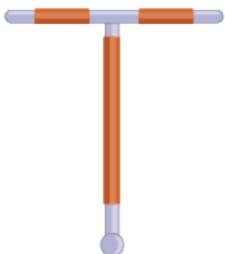
These devices are called **intrauterine devices**, or IUDs.



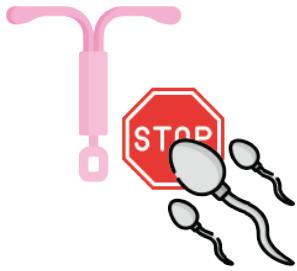
There are two kinds of IUDs.



One type is the hormonal IUD.



The other type is the copper IUD.



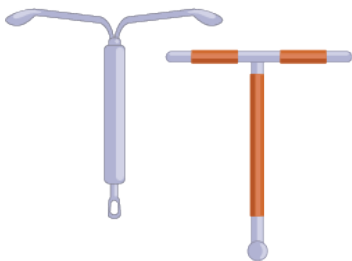
Both types of IUDs work by stopping sperm from getting through the uterus.



But the hormonal IUD also works by stopping ovulation.



Once the IUD is in your uterus, it lasts for 3-12 years.



It depends on the type of IUD.



The IUD is very good at preventing pregnancy.

## Condoms



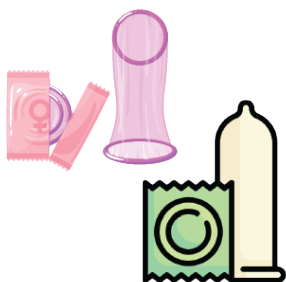
Condoms are a good way to help keep you or your partner from getting pregnant.



Condoms can also keep you from getting or giving someone a sexually transmitted infection.



We will talk about what sexually transmitted infections are in the section “What are STIs? How can you prevent STIs?”



**Condoms** are thin sheaths of material that go over the penis or in the vagina.



Most condoms are made out of rubber latex.

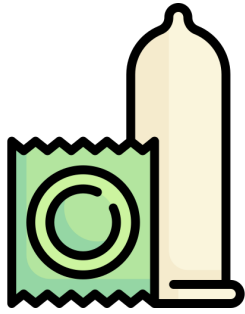


There are also non-latex condoms, if you are allergic to latex or need non-latex condoms.



There are two main types of condoms: external condoms or internal condoms.





## *External condoms*

**External condoms** are condoms that go over the penis.



If you are using a sex toy shaped like a penis, you can also put an external condom over the sex toy.

**HELLO**  
my name is

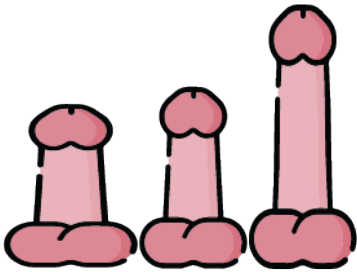
External condoms are sometimes called “male” condoms.



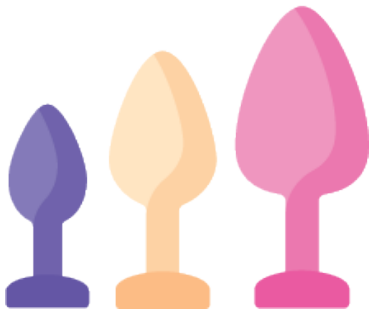
You can buy external condoms at most drugstores or get them from your doctor.



External condoms come in different sizes.



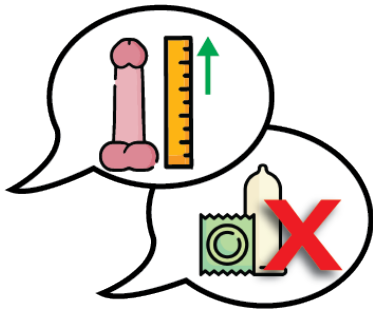
Different people have different sized penises.



And different people use different sized sex toys.



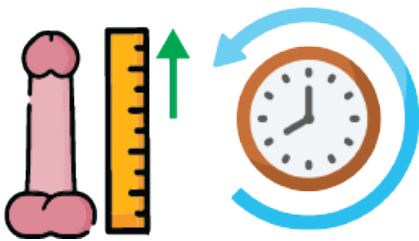
So it is important that there are different sized condoms for different people.



You might have heard someone say that their penis is “too big” for condoms.



This is not true!



It is true that their penis might have been too big for the condoms they used before.



But there are bigger condoms that would fit their penis.



## *Internal condoms*

**Internal condoms** are condoms that go inside someone's vagina or rectum (butt).



You can put an internal condom in up to 2 hours before having sex.



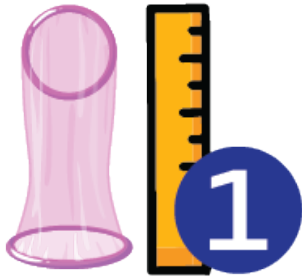
Some people prefer internal condoms because they do not have to rely on their partner using an external condom.



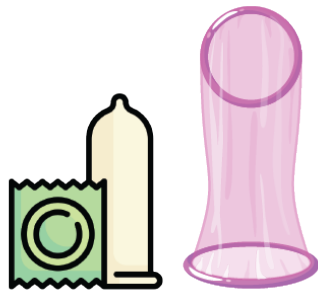
Internal condoms are sometimes called “female” condoms.



You can buy internal condoms at some drugstores or get them from your doctor.



Internal condoms come in one size.



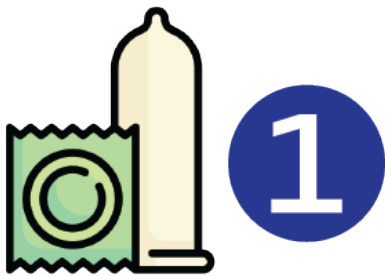
Internal condoms are bigger than external condoms.



Internal condoms are generally not made with rubber latex.



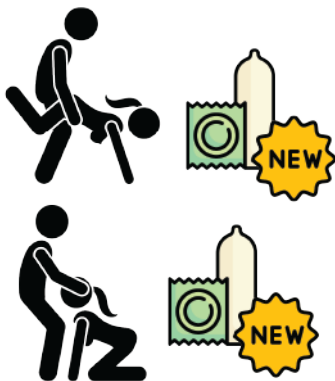
So if you or your partner has a latex allergy, internal condoms might be a good idea.



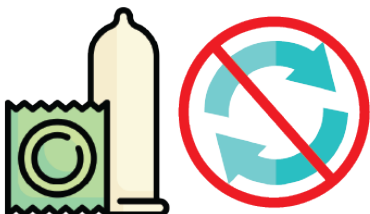
**NOTE:** Only use one condom at a time.



Do not use an internal and external condom at the same time.



Use a new condom for each sexual activity you do.



Do not reuse condoms.

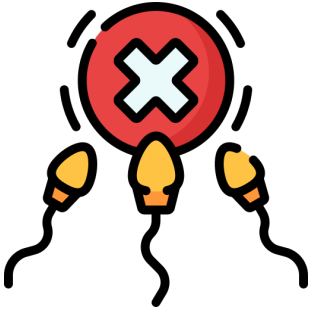


Always throw away condoms in the trash.

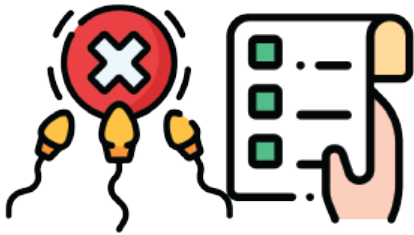


Do not flush condoms down the toilet.

# Sterilization



**Sterilization** is when someone has surgery so they cannot get pregnant or get someone else pregnant anymore.

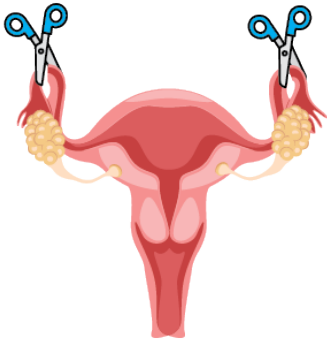


There are several types of sterilization.



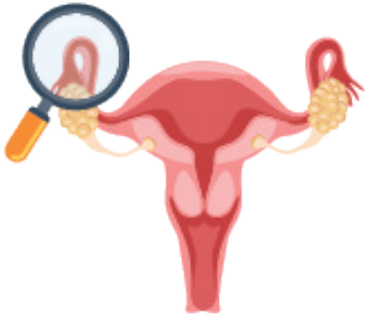
We will talk about the most common ones here.





## *Tubal ligation*

**Tubal ligation** is a kind of sterilization that people with Fallopian tubes can get.



(Remember, most people with vaginas have Fallopian tubes.)



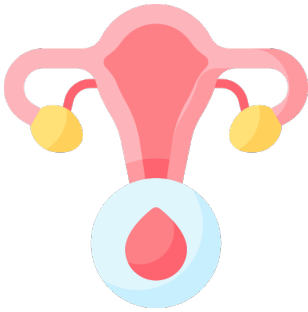
Tubal ligation is when a doctor cuts or ties the Fallopian tubes.



Then, sperm cannot get through the Fallopian tubes to meet with an egg.



Then, sperm cannot meet up with an egg and fertilize it.

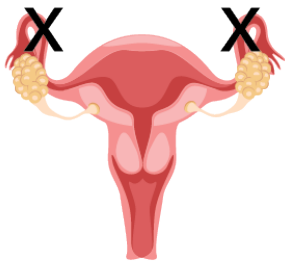


After tubal ligation, a person still gets a menstrual period.

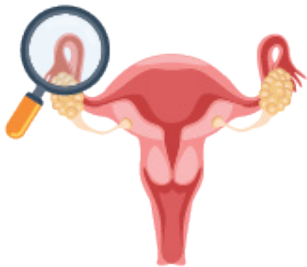


They just cannot get pregnant.

## *Salpingectomy*



**Salpingectomy** is a kind of sterilization that people with Fallopian tubes can get.



(Remember, most people with vaginas have Fallopian tubes.)



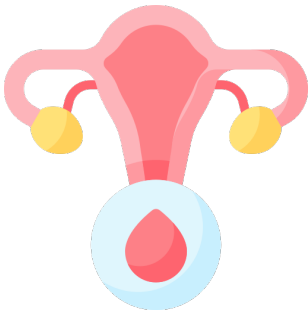
Salpingectomy is when a doctor removes the Fallopian tubes completely.



Then, sperm cannot get through the Fallopian tubes to meet with an egg.



Then, sperm cannot meet up with an egg.

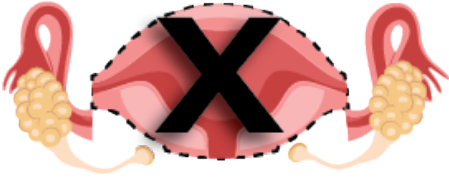


After a salpingectomy, a person still gets a menstrual period.

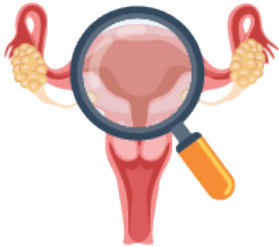


They just cannot get pregnant.

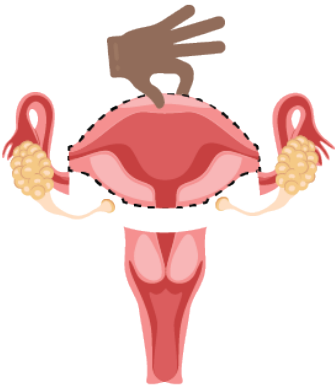
## *Hysterectomy*



**Hysterectomy** is a kind of sterilization that people with a uterus can get.



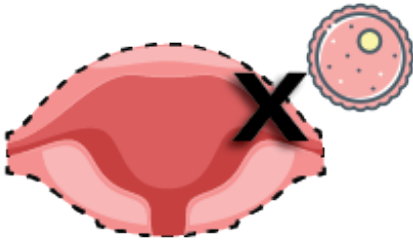
(Remember, most people with vaginas have uteruses.)



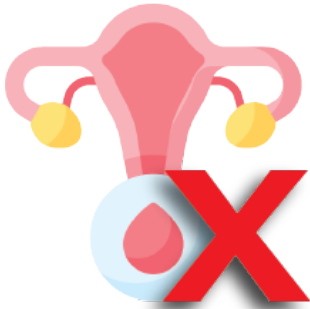
Hysterectomy is when a doctor removes the uterus completely.



Then, sperm cannot get through the uterus to meet up with an egg.



There is also nowhere for a fertilized egg to attach to.



After a hysterectomy, a person does not get a menstrual period anymore.



They also cannot get pregnant.

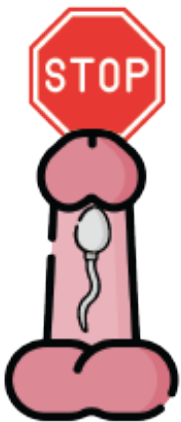


## *Vasectomy*

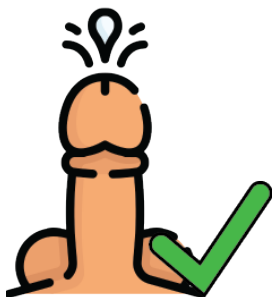
Vasectomy is a kind of sterilization that people with a penis can get.



Vasectomy is when a doctor cuts or ties the vas deferens (tubes that bring sperm from the testicles to the penis).



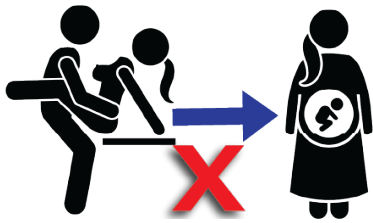
Then, sperm cannot get out of the penis and cause pregnancy.



After a vasectomy, a person can still ejaculate.



But the fluid they ejaculate will not contain sperm.



They cannot get someone else pregnant anymore.



# Abortion



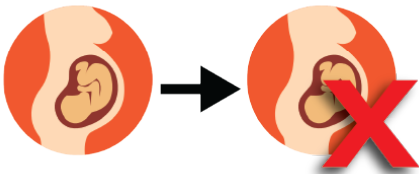
When a person is pregnant, they have a new human growing inside of them.



This new human is called a **fetus**.



An **abortion** is when a person decides to end their pregnancy without giving birth.



After getting an abortion, a person is not pregnant anymore.



(We say “pregnant people” instead of “women” to include all people who can get pregnant.)



Some transgender men and nonbinary people can get pregnant.



Also, not all women can get pregnant.)

# 2

There are a couple ways that abortions happen.



One is a **medication abortion**.



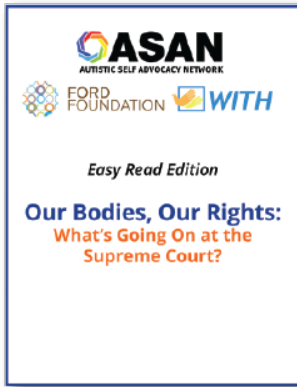
This is where a pregnant person takes pills to end their pregnancy.



Another is a **surgical abortion**.



This is when a pregnant person has surgery to end their pregnancy.



You can learn more about abortion in our toolkit "[Our Bodies, Our Rights: What's Going On at the Supreme Court?](#)"