



Are You in Treatment or Recovery?

Birth Control Gives You the Time to Heal and Take Care of Yourself

“When you’re going through treatment, you are working through a lot, you don’t always think about the possibility of getting pregnant...but you should. Birth control is so easily accessible and can help you.” - CLARA

You have taken a big step by getting treatment for addiction. You are taking control of your life. It is important to keep that control so you can get healthy and make plans for your future. Sticking to your treatment plan and staying sober are the keys to reaching your goals in life.

During treatment and recovery, it’s important to think about birth control if you are having sex. Birth control gives you time to take care of yourself. And it gives you the power to choose when you will have a baby. The best gift you can give your baby is a strong start in life—and that begins with a healthy mother and a healthy pregnancy at the right time.

I am in recovery and feel good. Why not get pregnant?

As a woman in recovery, you have what it takes to make the right choices and the determination to stick to them. You are more likely to have a healthy pregnancy, and a healthy baby, after you have completed treatment, have been in recovery for some time without relapsing, and have a healthy balance. You do not want to risk a relapse while pregnant because your baby could have health problems. Take time to heal completely. Recovery is a journey.



What health problems do babies have when their moms used opioids while they were pregnant?

- Feeding difficulties
- Tremors and irritability
- Vomiting and Diarrhea
- Low birth weight
- Breathing problems
- Seizures

More than
half of
pregnancies
are not
planned

Why should I use birth control?

Birth control works and is one of the best ways to prevent pregnancy. It will help you stay on track with your recovery. A baby could make your recovery harder. It will be more difficult to focus on yourself, your needs, and your health. Recovery is your most important job right now.

You may qualify for free birth control:

- Birth control is free if you have Medicaid.
- Based on changing rules under the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare), most insurance companies now cover the cost of birth control.

“I am so grateful someone urged me to get birth control. I came into treatment and witnessed other women having to deal with unintended pregnancies and the worries that their baby would be okay. Then watching the babies struggle was awful.” - LINDSEY

Both the IUD
and implant
work very well,
are safe, last
for several
years, and can
be removed
at any time.

What birth control is right for me?

Talk to your doctor about the best choice for you.

- **The Pill** works well when taken every day, but most women forget to take it sometimes. It is important to learn about other kinds of birth control.
- **The IUD** (short for intrauterine device) is a tiny piece of plastic that goes in your uterus (womb).
- **The birth control implant** is a tiny rod that goes in your upper arm.

You and your partner should always use condoms too, because none of the above options will protect you from diseases and infections that can pass between people during sex.

I am pregnant or thinking about trying to get pregnant. What should I do?

Talk to your doctor about ways to have a healthy pregnancy and the best treatment plan for you. This includes making sure you are taking the correct amount of your maintenance drug (such as methadone or buprenorphine, also known under brand names like Subutex or Suboxone). It is very important to stay in treatment. Getting and staying sober will help you stay in control of your life and take good care of yourself and your baby.



“When I was using, I still had the ability to know I did not want to get pregnant. I got the IUD and then, thankfully, got into treatment. I’ve been clean now for two years and have a beautiful, healthy one year old.”

- ANNA

For more information or to talk to someone about birth control:

- For questions about birth control please call: Illinois Women’s Health Line: 1-888-533-1282
- For questions about health care coverage please call 1-800-843-6154 or visit <https://abe.illinois.gov/abe/access/>
- Or you may contact your doctor’s office, recovery center, neighborhood health center, local health department, family planning clinic, or local hospital.



The Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative (ILPQC) is a statewide network of perinatal clinicians, nurses, hospitals, and public health leaders and policymakers that aims to improve outcomes for mothers and babies across Illinois.

ILPQC Collaborates with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the IDPH Regionalized Perinatal System and State Quality Council, Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois Chapter of March of Dimes, Illinois Hospital Association ACOG, AAP, AWHONN, ACNM, AFP, EverThrive Illinois and additional stakeholders.



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