

Contraception

Here at Ashville we offer a full contraceptive service including long-acting reversible methods of contraception (LARCs) so there is no need for you to go elsewhere for your contraceptive needs. LARCs include the contraceptive injection, the contraceptive implant and the coil.

There are many different types of contraception and all work in a different way. Different methods will suit different women. All of our GPs, Nurse Practitioners and nurses are fully qualified to counsel you regarding the best contraceptive option for you.

Contraceptive options range from condoms through to the coil. If you are thinking about contraception make an appointment today and come and discuss with our highly qualified team.

Know your options

Condoms

Condoms are the only form of protection that when used properly can help prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STI's) and pregnancy. There are a number of different types of condoms available. Condoms are available from any Sexual Health Clinic and your local pharmacist.

Contraceptive Pills

The combined pill contains two hormones, oestrogen and progestogen, which are similar to the natural hormones women produce in their ovaries. The combined pill works by stopping an egg from being produced (ovulation). If taken properly according to instructions it is 99% effective. This means that less than one woman in 100 who uses the pill will become pregnant in a year. There are many different types and this can be discussed with you if this is the option you choose.

Some women are unable to take oestrogen for medical reasons but other forms of contraception may be suitable.

The progestogen only pill (POP) works mainly by thickening the mucus at the top of your cervix (the neck of the womb). This makes it more difficult for sperm to move through it and reach an egg. In addition it also makes the lining of your womb thinner so it is less likely to accept a fertilised egg. In some women it stops the ovaries releasing an egg. If taken correctly, the POP is 99% effective at preventing pregnancy. It is not suitable for every woman to take and a nurse or doctor will discuss this with you at your appointment.

Contraceptive Injection

The contraceptive injection is over 99% effective in preventing pregnancy. The injection contains progestogen. Progestogen thickens the mucus in the cervix, which stops sperm reaching an egg. It also thins the lining of the womb so that an egg can't implant itself there. In some women, the injection stops ovulation (the release of an egg). This

method involves regular injections every 12 weeks and it is very important to have it re-done promptly otherwise you may become pregnant.

This option is useful for women who might forget to take the contraceptive pill every day.

Contraceptive Implant

The contraceptive implant is over 99% effective and works for three years before it needs to be replaced. It is a small, plastic rod containing the hormone progestogen. It is placed just under the skin of the upper arm under local anaesthetic. When it is put in it feels similar to having an injection. It works in a similar way to the contraception injection.

It is very useful for women who know they don't want to get pregnant for a while. Once the implant is in place, you don't have to think about contraception for three years. It is also useful for women who might forget to take the contraceptive pill every day.

You can have the implant removed at any time, and your natural fertility will return very quickly. This means that once the implant is removed, you could get pregnant as easily as if you'd never had the implant.

Doctors at Ashville trained to fit and remove the contraceptive implant are Dr D Ainsworth and Dr V Campbell. After the initial counselling appointment we can arrange for you to have the implant fitted or removed here at the surgery.

The Coil

There are two main types of coil. The IUD (intra-uterine device), and the IUS (intra-uterine system). Both are 99% effective at preventing pregnancy if used correctly.

IUDs are small devices made of copper that can be fitted in the womb. They can also be fitted as a form of emergency contraception within five days of unprotected sex. They work by stopping an egg from implanting in the womb.

The IUS is a very effective long-term method of contraception and works for up to five years. It is similar to an IUD but is made of plastic and contains a progestogen hormone that is released locally in the body. It works by thinning the lining of the womb, thickening mucous at the cervix to stop sperm getting through and in some women may stop release of an egg (ovulation). The IUS can also be used to control heavy periods.

If you choose to have the coil fitted this will involve an initial counselling appointment to ensure it is suitable for you, a further appointment for swabs if needed, and finally an appointment to fit your coil.

The coil can be removed at any time by one of our specially trained doctors and once removed, you'll quickly return to normal levels of fertility.

Doctors qualified to fit and remove the IUD/IUS here at Ashville are Dr D Ainsworth and Dr V Campbell.

Further information

If you need further information about your contraceptive choices make an appointment to discuss with our highly qualified team or ask for a copy of our contraceptive leaflet.

Alternatively further information about each form of contraception can be found on the NHS Choices website by clicking on the link below:

<http://www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/Contraception/Pages/Contraception-hub.aspx>

****IMPORTANT INFORMATION** EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION**

Emergency contraception can prevent pregnancy after unprotected sex or if your contraceptive method has failed or you have missed a pill or are late for your contraceptive injection etc.

If you have had unprotected sex or think you may be at risk of pregnancy contact us today for an appointment. All of our doctors and nurse practitioners are qualified to advise you regarding the 'Morning after Pill' and other options.

IT IS IMPORTANT YOU CONTACT US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, PREFERABLY WITHIN THE FIRST 24 HOURS, BUT WITHIN 72 HOURS IS ACCEPTABLE. THE SOONER YOU USE EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION THE MORE LIKELY IT IS TO BE EFFECTIVE IN PREVENTING YOU FROM BECOMING PREGNANT. IF YOU ARE LATER THAN THIS IT IS STILL WORTH DISCUSSING WITH ONE OF OUR DOCTORS.

Emergency contraception can also be obtained free from:

- Family planning and contraceptive clinics
- Some Genitourinary (GUM) clinics
- Some pharmacies and walk in centres

YOU CAN ALSO BUY THE MORNING AFTER PILL FROM MOST PHARMACIES IF YOU ARE OVER 16 YEARS OF AGE