

Contraception overview

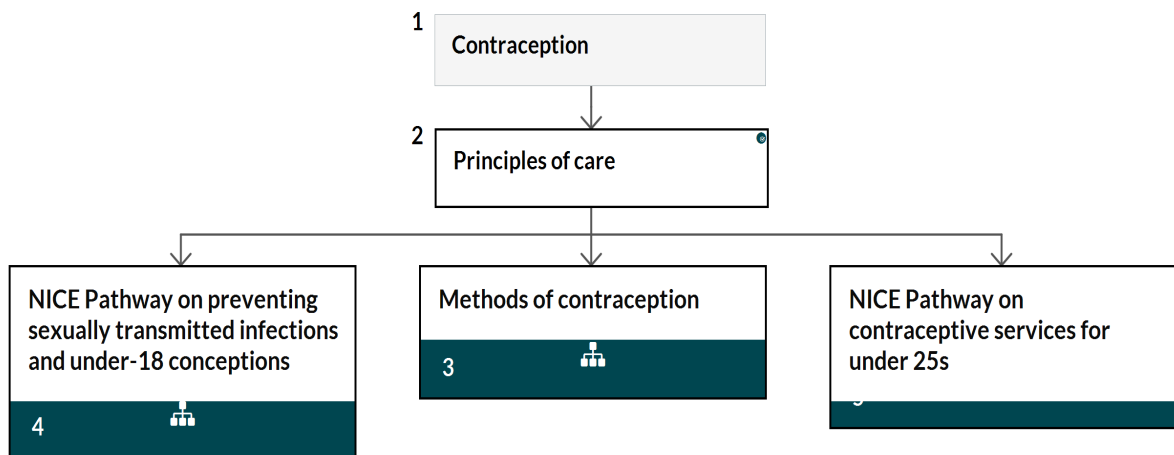
NICE Pathways bring together everything NICE says on a topic in an interactive flowchart. NICE Pathways are interactive and designed to be used online.

They are updated regularly as new NICE guidance is published. To view the latest version of this NICE Pathway see:

<http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/contraception>

NICE Pathway last updated: 28 September 2020

This document contains a single flowchart and uses numbering to link the boxes to the associated recommendations.



1 Contraception

No additional information

2 Principles of care

Information and support

Women requiring contraception should be given information about and offered a choice of all methods, including LARC methods.

Women should be provided with the method of contraception that is most acceptable to them, provided it is not contraindicated.

See also [the NICE Pathway on patient experience in adult NHS services](#).

Counselling and communication

Counselling about contraception should be sensitive to cultural differences and religious beliefs.

Healthcare professionals should have access to trained interpreters for women who are not English speaking, and to advocates for women with sensory impairments or learning disabilities.

Assessment and prescribing

A medical history – including relevant family, menstrual, contraceptive and sexual history – should be taken as part of the routine assessment of medical eligibility for individual contraceptive methods.

Healthcare professionals helping women to make contraceptive choices should be familiar with nationally agreed guidance on medical eligibility and recommendations for contraceptive use.

Healthcare professionals should exclude pregnancy by taking menstrual and sexual history before initiating any contraceptive methods.

Healthcare professionals should supply an interim method of contraception at first appointment if required.

Women who have a current VTE and need hormonal contraception while having treatment for

the VTE should be referred to a specialist in contraceptive care.

Sexually transmitted infections

Healthcare professionals providing contraceptive advice should promote safer sex.

Healthcare professionals providing contraceptive advice should be able to assess risk for STIs and advise testing when appropriate.

Healthcare professionals should be able to provide information about local services for STI screening, investigation and treatment.

Under 16s and women with learning and/or physical disabilities

Healthcare professionals should be aware of the law relating to the provision of advice and contraception for young people and for people with learning disabilities. Child protection issues and the Fraser guidelines should be considered when providing contraception for women younger than 16 years. (See the [Department of Health's best practice guidance for doctors and other healthcare professionals on the provision of advice and treatment to young people under 16 on contraception, sexual and reproductive health.](#))

Women with learning and/or physical disabilities should be supported in making their own decisions about contraception.

Contraception should be seen in terms of the needs of the individual rather than in terms of relieving the anxieties of carers or relatives.

When a woman with a learning disability is unable to understand and take responsibility for decisions about contraception, carers and other involved parties should meet to address issues around the woman's contraceptive need and to establish a care plan.

Training of healthcare professionals

Healthcare professionals advising women about contraceptive choices should be competent to:

- help women to consider and compare the risks and benefits of all methods relevant to their individual needs
- manage common side effects and problems.

Quality standards

The following quality statement is relevant to this part of the interactive flowchart.

1. Contraceptive information and methods

3 Methods of contraception

[See Contraception / Methods of contraception](#)

4 NICE Pathway on preventing sexually transmitted infections and under-18 conceptions

[See Preventing sexually transmitted infections and under-18 conceptions](#)

5 NICE Pathway on contraceptive services for under 25s

[See Contraceptive services for under 25s](#)

Glossary

LARC

long-acting reversible contraception

STIs

sexually transmitted infections

VTE

venous thromboembolism

Sources

[Long-acting reversible contraception](#) (2005 updated 2019) NICE guideline CG30

Your responsibility

Guidelines

The recommendations in this guideline represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, professionals and practitioners are expected to take this guideline fully into account, alongside the individual needs, preferences and values of their patients or the people using their service. It is not mandatory to apply the recommendations, and the guideline does not override the responsibility to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual, in consultation with them and their families and carers or guardian.

Local commissioners and providers of healthcare have a responsibility to enable the guideline to be applied when individual professionals and people using services wish to use it. They should do so in the context of local and national priorities for funding and developing services, and in light of their duties to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to reduce health inequalities. Nothing in this guideline should be interpreted in a way that would be inconsistent with complying with those duties.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.

Technology appraisals

The recommendations in this interactive flowchart represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, health professionals are expected to take these recommendations fully into account, alongside the individual needs, preferences and values of their patients. The application of the recommendations in this interactive flowchart is at the discretion of health professionals and their individual patients and do not override the responsibility of healthcare professionals to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or their carer or guardian.

Commissioners and/or providers have a responsibility to provide the funding required to enable the recommendations to be applied when individual health professionals and their patients wish to use it, in accordance with the NHS Constitution. They should do so in light of their duties to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to reduce health inequalities.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.

Medical technologies guidance, diagnostics guidance and interventional procedures guidance

The recommendations in this interactive flowchart represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, healthcare professionals are expected to take these recommendations fully into account. However, the interactive flowchart does not override the individual responsibility of healthcare professionals to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer.

Commissioners and/or providers have a responsibility to implement the recommendations, in

their local context, in light of their duties to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. Nothing in this interactive flowchart should be interpreted in a way that would be inconsistent with compliance with those duties.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.