

# Mister Lactation Doctor

## Birth Control While You Breastfeed

There are a variety of types of birth control that are available, some that complement the breastfeeding mother and others that can be detrimental to your breastmilk supply.

Estrogen containing birth control methods can decrease your milk supply, so the combined estrogen and progesterone pill is usually not prescribed to those breastfeeding.

Progesterone based contraception, such as the progesterone only pill, a hormonal IUD or the depo shot, tend to be a popular option, though these are not prescribed until after a few weeks postpartum and when milk supply is well established.

And, of course, there is always abstinence and condoms available to the couple who are not planning on having an additional child for the time being.

Despite all of these, there is another method that is becoming increasingly popular, and it is known as the Lactational Amenorrhea Method (LAM). This method is a great way to support the breastfeeding dyad and to promote exclusive breastfeeding.

LAM requires a mother to answer 'no' to all of the following:

- Has your period returned?
- Are you providing baby with any supplemental fluids or food in addition to breastfeeding?
- Are you going long periods without breastfeeding (i.e. do you go the full night without a feed)?
- Is your baby older than 6 months?

If all of these criteria are met, this form of birth control has been found to be up to 98% effective, which surpasses the efficacy of many other forms of birth control.

Of course, whichever method of birth control you are considering, it is always important to include your healthcare provider in the discussion for further details.

Always remember, you are doing a wonderful job!

Take care,



**Mister Lactation Doctor**  
**Dr. Brian Hartman MD, CCFP**

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