

Pulling Out

Withdrawal, Pull Out Method



How does pulling out work?



- Pregnancy happens when sperm fertilizes an egg. When a person with a penis ejaculates, the semen that comes out of their penis contains sperm. **Pulling the penis out of, and away from, the vagina prior to ejaculation means that there is less sperm inside or near the vagina to fertilize an egg.**
- Pulling out works for people of **all weights and those using gender affirming hormone therapy**. It works for people of **all ages**, but those who are younger, or have just started having sex, may have more difficulty removing their penis from a vagina prior to ejaculation.

How do you use the pull out method?

during sex

You and your partner must decide to pull out during **each act of penis-vagina sex**.

- With practice, people with penises can learn how it feels prior to ejaculation to get better at pulling out.
- Your partner should empty their bladder before sex to reduce the chance of sperm in their pre-ejaculate.
- Pulling out works better if you agree with your partner prior to sex that you will use the pull out method.
- You need to communicate with your partner during sex to ensure they are able to pull out, especially depending on sexual position.
- Pulling out requires self-control, which may be harder to do for those with premature ejaculation or who have sex after using alcohol or other intoxicating substances.
- Pulling out may require cleaning up the ejaculated semen after sex.
- You and your partner can decide to use pulling out at any point prior to ejaculation. There is nothing to buy or do beforehand.



Privacy and control

- You do not need a provider to start or stop using the pull out method. Your provider can counsel you on how to pull out correctly to improve how well it works.
- You and your partner must agree to use the pull out method. Your partner may have more control over using this method than you do. Pulling out requires trust.
- Someone else cannot see that you are using this method.

When starting the pull out method, will it work immediately?



Yes, the pull out method works for each act of penis-vagina sex you use it correctly. If used incorrectly, or not at all, it will not work.



Pulling out may not be right for people who

- Are not in a trusting relationship with their partner where they both agree to use the pull out method and communicate about it before and during sex.
- Have a partner who is not able to anticipate when they will ejaculate and pull out before they do.



Use emergency contraception if

You think some semen could be in your vagina.

Some people use pulling out in the moment as backup contraception because another method was not available or there was a problem using it. Even when done correctly, pulling out is not highly effective. You may consider using emergency contraception even if you pulled out correctly if you would like more protection from pregnancy.

How well does pulling out prevent pregnancy?

- On average, **20 out of 100 people using pulling out will get pregnant each year.** This means it is **80% effective** with typical use. Typical use considers how easy it is to pull out. Some people will not be able to pull out prior to ejaculation every time they have sex.
- With perfect use, meaning pulling out is always successful and ejaculation is always away from the vagina, 4 out of 100 people using pulling out will get pregnant each year. It is 96% effective. Perfect use is hard to achieve.
- Pregnancy can occur if ejaculation touches the outside of the vaginal opening.
- Pre-ejaculate, also known as pre-cum, can sometimes contain sperm and is deposited into the vagina prior to pulling out.
- **You can use another method of contraception with pulling out to provide more protection against pregnancy.**



Side effects

Sexually transmitted infections: Does not prevent.

- Use external or internal condoms to lower your risk of all sexually transmitted infections.

Period: No effect.

Period cramps: No effect.

Weight: No effect.

Acne: No effect.

Fertility return: When you stop using the pull out method, you can get pregnant right away.

Other possible side effects: Because pulling out requires you to interrupt sex just before orgasm for the partner with a penis, it may lessen sexual satisfaction for them.



Postpartum use

Pulling out is **safe to use right after giving birth.** It has no effect on lactation, breastfeeding/ chestfeeding, or infant development.



Contact your provider if

- You or your partner would like counseling on how to use the pull out method correctly.
- You would like access to emergency contraception to have on hand before you need it in case your partner does not pull out.



Questions to ask your provider

- How can I talk to my partner about pulling out as an option for pregnancy prevention?
- How can my partner get better at anticipating when they will ejaculate?
- What if my partner ejaculates near my vagina?

Scan for a contraception guide and information sheets on each method.

