



**YOUR  
HEALTH.  
YOUR  
CHOICE.**

# Withdrawal

Talk to your partner about birth control before you have sex. You can use latex condoms to lower your chances of getting sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and prevent an unwanted pregnancy.

## **What is withdrawal?**

Withdrawal is a form of birth control. During sex, the man takes his penis out of a woman's vagina before he ejaculates. When a man ejaculates he releases a fluid called semen. Sperm is found in semen.

## **How does withdrawal work?**

During vaginal sex, the man pulls his penis out before he ejaculates. Then, he ejaculates away from the woman's vagina and vaginal area.

## **How effective is withdrawal?**

Some research shows that out of 100 women whose partner is using withdrawal, about 80 will not get pregnant. There are many reasons why withdrawal does not always work. Men cannot always control when they are going to ejaculate. Even before they ejaculate, men release a clear liquid from their penis, which they may not be aware of. This is called pre-ejaculate. The pre-ejaculate also has sperm in it. If a woman gets pre-ejaculate in her vagina, she could become pregnant. Withdrawal may work better if the pre-ejaculate is wiped off before the penis is inserted into the vagina. Withdrawal will not work well if you have sex at the time of the month when you are likely to get pregnant. Withdrawal is a better form of birth control if you use it with another kind of birth control, like condoms and spermicidal foam. Withdrawal does not protect you or your partner against sexually transmitted infections (STIs). You can pass on or get a STI from pre-ejaculate.

## **How do you use withdrawal?**

When a man feels he is about to ejaculate, he should take his penis out of the woman's vagina. He should ejaculate away from the woman's vagina and vaginal area.

If you think some ejaculate has gotten into your vagina, put some spermicide into your vagina right away. Your chances of getting pregnant may be lowered. If you have used withdrawal and are concerned about pregnancy, there are two options.

**It is important to use condoms or a latex barrier with sexual partners to decrease the risk of getting a sexually transmitted infection.**

- \* You can take the emergency contraceptive pill within 72 hours of the intercourse.
- \* You can ask about having an IUD inserted within 1 week of intercourse.

### **What are the advantages and disadvantages of withdrawal?**

#### **Advantages**

- \* It is better than using no birth control at all.
- \* It is not expensive.
- \* You don't need to see a clinician to use it.
- \* You only use it when you need it, i.e. during intercourse
- \* It doesn't cause any changes in your body.

#### **Disadvantages**

- \* You and your partner(s) are not protected against sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.
- \* You might get pregnant.
- \* You need to negotiate with your partner that you will both interrupt or stop sexual intercourse before ejaculation.
- \* You will have to stop sexual intercourse suddenly.

### **Where can you get information about withdrawal?**

You can ask a clinician or counsellor about using withdrawal and other kinds of birth control.

#### **If you need further information or would like to book an appointment, call:**

Planned Parenthood Toronto Health Services for youth ages 13 to 29. 416-927-7171. Health Services offers same-day, scheduled and drop-in appointments. For more information visit [www.ppt.on.ca](http://www.ppt.on.ca).

Women's Programming at the Bay Centre for Birth Control for women of all ages at 416-351-3700.

Youth can also access information about sexual health by calling the Teen Sex InfoLine at 416-961-3200 or chat live using MSN messenger at [spiderbytes@hotmail.com](mailto:spiderbytes@hotmail.com) from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday to Wednesday and 12 noon to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. You can also email us a question anytime at [askus@spiderbytes.ca](mailto:askus@spiderbytes.ca) or visit [www.spiderbytes.ca](http://www.spiderbytes.ca).