

2015 Quick Reference Chart for the WHO Medical Eligibility Criteria for Contraceptive Use – to initiate or continue use of combined oral contraceptives (COCs), depot-medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA), progestin-only implants, copper intrauterine device (Cu-IUD)

CONDITION	Sub-condition	COC	DMPA	Implants	Cu-IUD	
Pregnancy		NA	NA	NA		
Breastfeeding	Less than 6 weeks postpartum				See i.	
	6 weeks to < 6 months postpartum					
	6 months postpartum or more					
Postpartum and not breastfeeding	< 21 days				See i.	
	< 21 days with other risk factors for VTE*					
	≥ 21 to 42 days with other risk factors for VTE*					
	> 42 days					
Postpartum and breastfeeding or not breastfeeding	< 48 hours or more than 4 weeks	See ii.	See ii.	See ii.		
	≥ 48 hours to less than 4 weeks					
	Puerperal sepsis					
Postabortion	Immediate post-septic					
Smoking	Age ≥ 35 years, < 15 cigarettes/day					
	Age ≥ 35 years, ≥ 15 cigarettes/day					
Multiple risk factors for cardiovascular disease						
Hypertension BP = blood pressure	History of (where BP cannot be evaluated)					
	BP is controlled and can be evaluated					
	Elevated BP (systolic 140 - 159 or diastolic 90 - 99)					
	Elevated BP (systolic ≥ 160 or diastolic ≥ 100)					
	Vascular disease					
Deep venous thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE)	History of DVT/PE					
	Acute DVT/PE					
	DVT/PE, established on anticoagulant therapy					
	Major surgery with prolonged immobilization					
Known thrombogenic mutations						
Ischemic heart disease (current or history of) or stroke (history of)				I	C	
Known hyperlipidemias						
Complicated valvular heart disease						
Systemic lupus erythematosus	Positive or unknown antiphospholipid antibodies					
	Severe thrombocytopenia		I	C	I	C
	Immunosuppressive treatment				I	C
Headaches	Non-migrainous (mild or severe)	I	C			
	Migraine without aura (age < 35 years)	I	C			
	Migraine without aura (age ≥ 35 years)	I	C			
	Migraines with aura (at any age)		I	C	I	C

- Category 1 There are no restrictions for use.
- Category 2 Generally use; some follow-up may be needed.
- Category 3 Usually not recommended; clinical judgment and continuing access to clinical services are required for use.
- Category 4 The method should not be used.

- I/C Initiation/Continuation: A woman may fall into either one category or another, depending on whether she is initiating or continuing to use a method. Where I/C is not marked, the category is the same for initiation and continuation.
- NA Not Applicable: Women who are pregnant do not require contraception. If these methods are accidentally initiated, no harm will result.
- i See condition "Postpartum and breastfeeding or not breastfeeding" instead.
- ii See condition "Breastfeeding" or condition "Postpartum and not breastfeeding" instead.
- iii Women who use methods other than IUDs can use them regardless of HIV stage or use of ART.
- * Other risk factors for VTE include: previous VTE, thrombophilia, immobility, transfusion at delivery, BMI > 30 kg/m², postpartum hemorrhage, immediately post-caesarean delivery, pre-eclampsia, and smoking.
- ** Evaluation of an undiagnosed mass should be pursued as soon as possible.
- *** Anticonvulsants include: phenytoin, carbamazepine, barbiturates, primidone, topiramate, oxcarbazepine, and lamotrigine. Lamotrigine is a category 1 for implants.

CONDITION	Sub-condition	COC	DMPA	Implants	Cu-IUD	
Unexplained vaginal bleeding (prior to evaluation)					I	C
Gestational trophoblastic disease	Regressing or undetectable β-hCG levels					
	Persistently elevated β-hCG levels or malignant disease					
Cancers	Cervical (awaiting treatment)				I	C
	Endometrial				I	C
	Ovarian				I	C
Breast disease	Undiagnosed mass	**	**	**		
	Current cancer					
	Past w/ no evidence of current disease for 5 yrs					
Uterine distortion due to fibroids or anatomical abnormalities						
STIs/PID	Current purulent cervicitis, chlamydia, gonorrhea				I	C
	Vaginitis					
	Current pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)				I	C
	Other STIs (excluding HIV/hepatitis)					
	Increased risk of STIs					
	Very high individual risk of exposure to STIs				I	C
Pelvic tuberculosis					I	C
Diabetes	Nephropathy/retinopathy/neuropathy					
	Diabetes for > 20 years					
Symptomatic gall bladder disease (current or medically treated)						
Cholestasis (history of)	Related to pregnancy					
	Related to oral contraceptives					
Hepatitis	Acute or flare	I	C			
	Chronic or client is a carrier					
Cirrhosis	Mild					
	Severe					
Liver tumors (hepatocellular adenoma and malignant hepatoma)						
High risk of HIV or HIV-infected (Stage 1 or 2)						
AIDS (HIV-infected Stage 3 or 4)	No antiretroviral therapy (ARV)				I	C
	Improved to Stage 1 or 2 on ARV therapy	See iii.	See iii.	See iii.		
	Not improved on ARV therapy				I	C
Drug interactions	Rifampicin or rifabutin					
	Anticonvulsant therapy***					

This chart shows a complete list of all conditions classified by WHO as Category 3 and 4.

Source: Adapted from *Medical Eligibility Criteria for Contraceptive Use, 5th Edition*. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2015.
Available: http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/family_planning/en/index.html