

# The contraceptive “wheel” – a tool for quick answers?

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Fifth edition, 2015

## Medical eligibility criteria for contraceptive use

COCs Barrier methods IUDs Fertility awareness-based methods Lactational amenorrhoea Patch Female surgical sterilization Intrauterine devices CICs Coitus interruptus Copper IUD for emergency contraception POCs Patch Male surgical sterilization Ring ECPs

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A WHO family planning cornerstone



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# Medical eligibility criteria for contraceptive use

## 1.2 Methods

### 1.2.1 Development of earlier editions of the *Medical eligibility criteria for contraceptive use*

This document builds on a process initiated in 1994 to develop the first edition. The initial process involved comparing the eligibility criteria used by different agencies for various contraceptives, preparing summaries of published medical and epidemiological literature relevant to medical eligibility criteria, and preparing a draft classification for review by a larger group of experts and agencies. Two expert Working Group meetings were organized by WHO, in March 1994 and May 1995, to review the background classifications and to formulate recommendations; publication of the document followed in 1996.

1996 First edition  
2000  
2003  
2009  
2015 Fifth edition

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## Process of updating the WHO MEC – Guideline development group (GDG)

World Health Organization's, Department of Reproductive Health,  
in collaboration with it's network of international partners

- Creation of groups with varying roles to undertake the revision
- Convening an **additional consultation to define the scope of the revision**, giving priority to controversial topics and those for which new evidence had emerged, including topics addressed in interim guidance, clarifying recommendations with a Category 2/3 classification, and **drafting questions relating to population, intervention, comparator and outcome (PICO questions)** to guide the preparation of systematic reviews; and
- **Applying the Grading Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluation (GRADE) approach to evidence review** and recommendation formulation
- The GDG (fifth edition) consisted of 68 individuals representing a wide range of specialised areas (i.e., obstetrics & gynecology, pharmacology, endocrinology, epidemiology, demography, cardiology, program management, biostatistics and family medicine).
- GDG meetings (14–15 May 2013, 9–12 March 2014 and 24–25 September 2014)



WHO



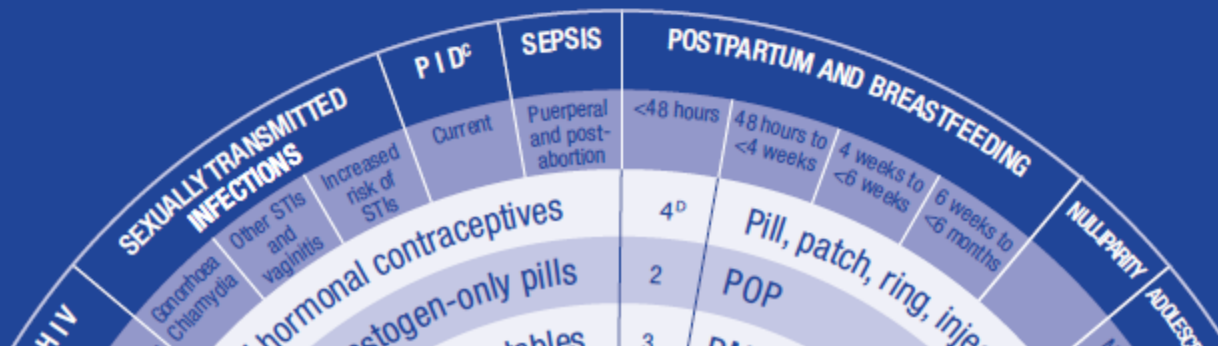
# MEDICAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA WHEEL FOR CONTRACEPTIVE USE 2015

## Abbreviations

COC-combined oral contraceptives  
POP-progestogen-only pill  
DMPA-depot medroxyprogesterone acetate  
IUD – intrauterine device  
LNG-IUD – levonorgestrel-releasing IUD

PID – pelvic inflammatory disease

NA – not applicable



**Outer circle:** List of relevant conditions/diseases

**For each contraceptive method:** COCs, PoPs, Pols (DMPA), Implants, LNG-IUD, Copper IUD

**MEC categories for contraceptive eligibility**

<b>1</b>	<b>A condition for which there is no restriction for the use of the contraceptive method</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>A condition where the advantages of using the method generally outweigh the theoretical or proven risks</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>A condition where the theoretical or proven risks usually outweigh the advantages of using the method</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>A condition which represents an unacceptable health risk if the contraceptive method is used.</b>