

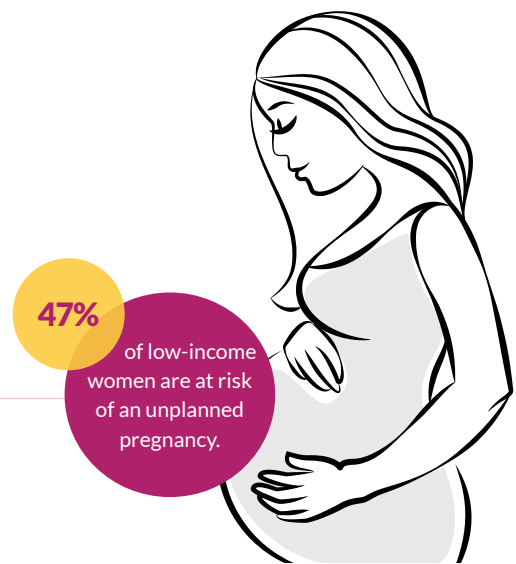
BIRTH CONTROL AT A GLANCE

# Low-Income Women

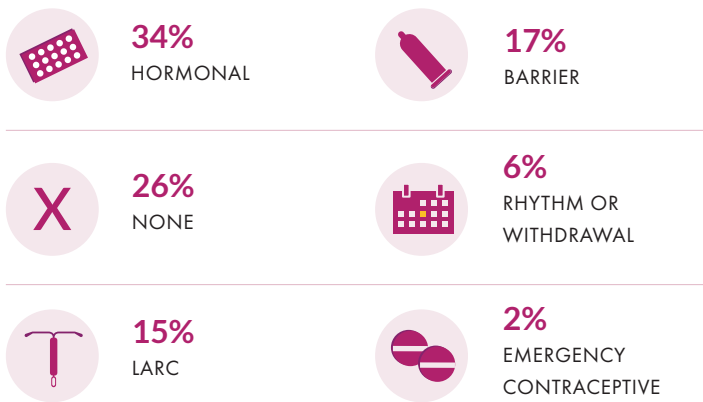
Birth control plays an important role in a woman's life by helping her and her partner plan whether and when to have children. Unintended pregnancies can have major repercussions that affect a woman's life. These mistimed or unwanted pregnancies are associated with negative health and economic outcomes for women of all ages and their families. Women report that birth control allows them to take better care of themselves and their families by completing their education, keeping a job, and supporting themselves financially. In this fact sheet, we use data from the 2018 Survey of Family Planning and Women's Lives, a nationally representative survey of women ages 18 to 44, to describe birth control use among low-income women.



of low-income women report being **sexually active** with men in the **past six months**.

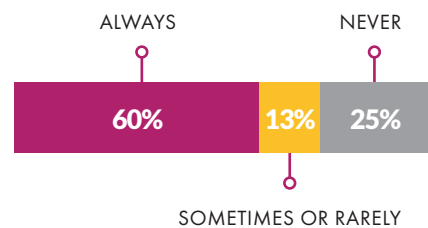


CURRENT BIRTH CONTROL METHODS



Note: LARC= long-acting reversible contraceptive.

Though six in ten low-income women at risk report always using birth control, one in four reports never using it.

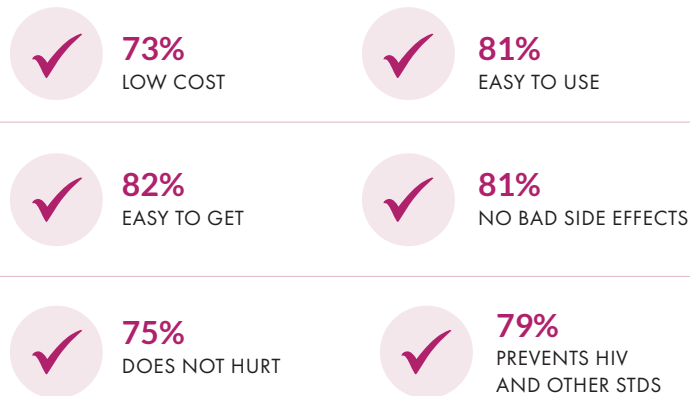




### BARRIERS TO BIRTH CONTROL

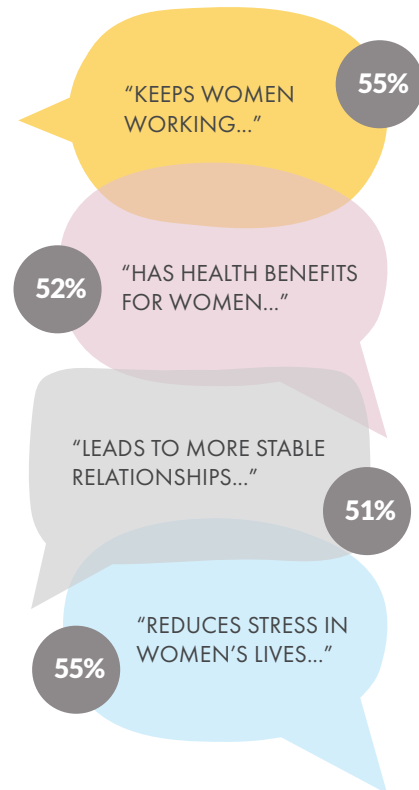
Despite the importance of birth control in avoiding unintended pregnancy, barriers prevent some women from accessing the birth control method they want. Cost-related barriers have diminished following the Affordable Care Act, which expanded insurance coverage and defined birth control as a preventive service with no cost sharing for most women with private coverage. But even if women have no-cost coverage for birth control, they may find their preferred brand or method is not covered or not available the same day they ask for it. Uninsured women may still face cost-related barriers, though programs such as Title X and Medicaid family planning expansions offer low- or no-cost birth control to low-income women. In addition, women may face other barriers, such as lack of transportation, inconvenient provider or pharmacy hours, societal stigma, or a lack of knowledge or misperceptions about available methods or providers.

#### FACTORS IMPORTANT TO METHOD CHOICE



**Methods and Notes:** Estimates are from the 2018 Survey of Family Planning and Women’s Lives, a probability-based internet and telephone survey weighted to be nationally representative. The survey was fielded in January and February 2018 among 2,115 women ages 18 to 44, including 559 women with family income at or below 138 percent of the 2016 federal poverty level (low income). At risk is defined as women who are sexually active, not sterilized, and not pregnant or not seeking to become pregnant in the next year. The survey allows women to report multiple birth control methods. We categorize women by the most effective method reported using the National Survey of Family Growth’s methodology. Long-acting reversible contraceptives are intrauterine devices and implants; hormonal methods are the birth control shot, pill, patch, and ring; and barrier methods are condoms and other unspecified barrier methods.

#### WHAT LOW-INCOME WOMEN ARE SAYING ABOUT BIRTH CONTROL



Though most low-income women have an overall positive perception of birth control and its benefits, some women have negative perceptions that may affect their willingness to use birth control.

