



# Proactive Planning: Concurrent Mental Health Treatment and Reproductive Planning

When treating female Sailors and Marines for a Mental Health diagnosis, encouraging them to consider contraceptive options protects them from an unintended pregnancy & promotes Force Readiness.

## Mental Health Risks Associated with Pregnancy

- Depression is the most common complication in pregnancy, and unintended pregnancy rates have historically been higher in the military than in matched civilian groups.
- Unintended pregnancy is a risk factor for poor maternal mental health, both during and after pregnancy.<sup>2</sup>
- Unintended pregnancies are at higher risk for co-morbid cigarette smoking and alcohol use, irregular prenatal care, lower rates of breastfeeding, and non-compliance with childhood vaccination schedules.<sup>2</sup>
- If not in remission, pregnancy is likely to exacerbate existing mental health symptoms.<sup>5</sup>
- Untreated depression in pregnant mothers can lead to long-term effects in pediatric development and future mental health disorders.
- **Unless planning a pregnancy, women of childbearing age seen for a mental health condition should be counseled on available contraceptive options.**

### What Can I do as a Mental Health Prescriber?

- Make asking about contraception part of your assessment **for all female Sailors and Marines.**
- **Depending on comfort level, initiate contraception, or refer to appropriate resources.**
- Refer patients to a local PINC Clinic (i.e., Contraception Walk-In Clinic) or their PCM to learn about their contraceptive options and obtaining contraception.
- Direct female Sailors and Marines towards Decide + Be Ready app (see below) to begin evaluating their options.

### Consider Prescribing Emergency Contraception

- Plan B® and ella® are included on the Authorized Medical Allowance List (AMAL) and the Independent Duty Corpsmen (IDC) formulary.
- Plan B® does not require a prescription.
- **ella® requires a prescription.**
- Plan B® can be effective up to 72 hours following an unprotected encounter.
- Ella® can be effective up to 120 hours following an unprotected encounter.
- Consider prescribing for any women, and especially for those who do not desire a daily hormonal contraceptive.

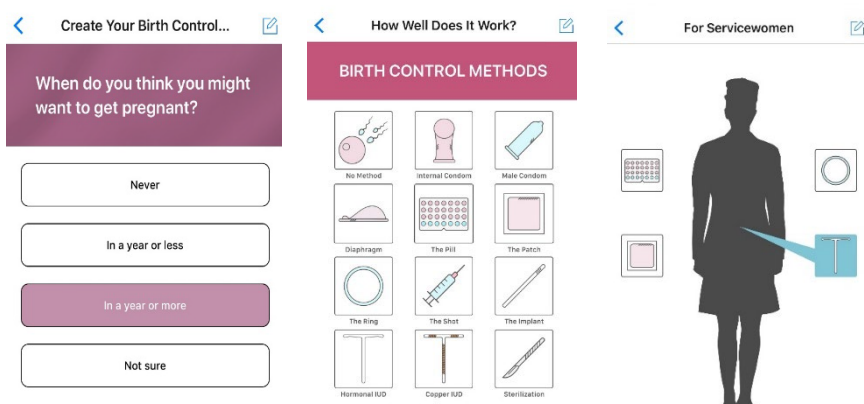
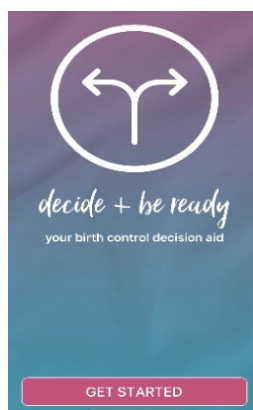
## Prescribing Psychotropics During Pregnancy

- Ensure all women of childbearing age taking psychotropics are properly counseled about the risks and benefits of medications during pregnancy, and the benefits of family planning while working towards euthymia.
- For patients with mental health diagnoses, medical records should document a form of contraception in use or absence of, and if needed, a discussion of referral for contraception.

- **Decide + Be Ready** is a mobile app designed to help active duty women make decisions regarding contraception given their unique needs as service women.
- This app takes into consideration that service women, when deployed or working in uniquely challenging environments, may also choose to use one of the birth control methods to manage or even skip menstrual periods.



Scan this Quick Response Code to Download



Screenshots from the Decide + Be Ready mobile app



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### Contraceptive Walk-In Clinic

Location:  
Hours:  
Phone Number:

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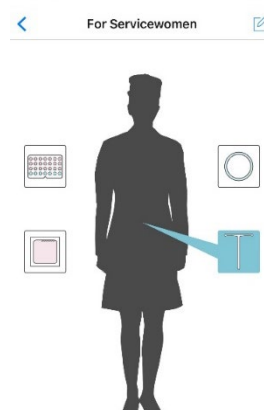
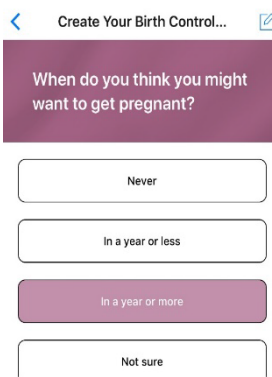
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<sup>1</sup>Personal and Professional Choices Survey 2018 <sup>2</sup>BioMed Central, Pregnancy and Childbirth 2015 <sup>3</sup>American Journal of Public Health 2016 <sup>4</sup>American Pregnancy Association <sup>5</sup>American Psychological Association