



## Reasonably Ruling Out Pregnancy Initiation of Contraception

### How to be Reasonably Certain that a Woman is Not Pregnant

A healthcare provider can be reasonably certain that a woman is not pregnant if she has no symptoms or signs of pregnancy and meets any one of the following criteria:

- Is  $\leq 7$  days after the start of normal menses
- Has not had sexual intercourse since the start of last normal menses
- Has been correctly and consistently using a reliable method of contraception
- Is  $\leq 7$  days after spontaneous or induced abortion
- Is within 4 weeks postpartum
- Is fully or nearly fully breastfeeding (exclusively breastfeeding or the vast majority [ $\geq 85\%$ ] of feeds are breastfeeds) amenorrhoeic, and  $< 6$  months postpartum

*“In situations in which the healthcare provider is uncertain whether the woman might be pregnant, the benefits of starting the implant, depot medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA), combined hormonal contraceptives and progestin-only pills likely exceed any risk; therefore, starting the method should be considered at any time, with a follow-up pregnancy test in 2-4 weeks.”*



# Flow Chart to Determine Candidates for Combined Hormonal Contraception (CHC)

## Decision-Making Process



No	1. Are you currently breastfeeding a baby less than 6 months of age?	Yes
No	2. Do you smoke cigarettes and are you more than 35 years of age?	Yes
No	3. Have you ever been told you have breast cancer?	Yes
No	4. Have you ever had a stroke, blood clot in your legs or lungs, or heart attack?	Yes
No	5. Do you have repeated severe headaches, often on one side, and/or pulsating, causing nausea, and which are made worse by light, noise, or movement?	Yes
No	6. Do you regularly take any pills for tuberculosis (TB) or seizures (fits)?	Yes
No	7. Have you given birth in the last 6 weeks?	Yes
No	8. Do you have gall bladder disease or serious liver disease or jaundice (yellow skin or eyes)?	Yes
No	9. have you ever been told you have high blood pressure?	Yes
No	10. Have you ever been told you have diabetes (high sugar in your blood)?	Yes
No	11. Do you have two or more conditions that could increase your chances of heart attack or stroke, such as smoking, obesity, or diabetes?	Yes
No	12. Have you ever been told that you have a rheumatic disease such as lupus?	Yes

If the client answered NO to all of the questions 1-12, the client can use CHCs. Proceed to questions 13-18.

If the client answered YES to **any of questions 1-6**, she is not a good candidate for CHCs. Counsel about other available methods or refer.

If the client answered YES to **any of questions 7-12**, CHCs cannot be initiated without further evaluation. Evaluate or refer as appropriate, and give condoms to use in the meantime. See explanations for more instruction.



# Flow Chart to Determine Candidates for Combined Hormonal Contraception (CHC)

## Decision-Making Process



No	13. Did your last menstrual period start within the past 7 days?	Yes
No	14. Have you abstained from sexual intercourse since your last menstrual period or delivery?	Yes
No	15. Have you been using a reliable contraceptive method consistently and correctly since your last menstrual period or delivery?	Yes
No	16. Have you had a baby in the last 4 weeks?	Yes
No	11. Did you have a baby less than 6 months ago, are you fully or nearly-fully breastfeeding, and have you had no menstrual period since then?	Yes
No	18. Have you had a miscarriage or abortion in the last 7 days?	Yes

If the client answered **NO** to **all of questions 13-18**, pregnancy cannot be ruled out using the checklist.

Rule out pregnancy by other means. Give her condoms to use until pregnancy can be ruled out.

Offer emergency contraception if every unprotected sex act since last menses occurred within the last 5 days.

If the client answered **YES** to **at least one of the questions 13-18** and she is free of signs or symptoms of pregnancy, you can be reasonably sure she is not pregnant. The client can start CHC's now.

If the client began her last menstrual period **within the past 5 days**, she can start CHC's now. No additional contraception protection.

If the client began her last menstrual period **more than 5 days ago**, tell her to **begin taking CHCs now**, but instruct her that she must **use condoms or abstain from sex for the next 7 days**. Give her condoms to use for the next 7 days.