

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	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)					
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)					
Gestational trophoblastic disease	Regressing or undetectable β-hCG levels				I C
	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					
Diabetes	Nephropathy/retinopathy/neuropathy				I C
	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