

5.3.5 Contraception

AQA GCSE Biology (Higher) Question and answer notes

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How to use these notes

These notes cover everything you need to know for this part of the specification. They have been written in question-answer format to make them easier for you to study from.

In order to study successfully, I recommend you do the following for each question and answer:

- Read it carefully and make sure you **understand** it.
- **Memorise** the answer.
- **Practice** applying your understanding to past exam questions.

A good way to memorise information is to use **retrieval practice**. This is when you practise retrieving information from your memory. You could do this by making a flashcard for each question with the question on one side and the answer on the other. Or you could use a flashcard app. Alternatively, use a sheet of paper to cover up the answer so you can only see the question. Try to answer the question and then check how you did.

You should practise retrieving each answer from your memory until you can do it perfectly. Even once you can retrieve the answer perfectly, your ability to retrieve it will probably fade as time passes without practising. Therefore you will need to keep going back to the questions that you have previously mastered and practising them again. However, each time you re-learn the answer, the memory will be stronger and will last longer than the time before.

What is contraception?

Contraception is any method used to prevent pregnancy from occurring during sex.

What is hormonal contraception?

Hormonal contraception is contraception that works by taking hormones into the body which prevent pregnancy from occurring. At the moment, hormonal contraception is only available for women, but there are forms of hormonal contraception being developed for men.

What are the main methods of hormonal contraception?

The main methods of hormonal contraception are:

- Oral contraceptives - pills containing hormones that inhibit FSH production so that no egg cells mature.
- A hormonal intrauterine device - a device inserted into the uterus that releases hormones that inhibit FSH production so that no egg cells mature.
- Injections, implants or skin patches that slowly release progesterone to inhibit the maturation and release of egg cells for a number of months or years.

What are the main non-hormonal methods of contraception?

The main non-hormonal methods of contraception are:

- Barrier methods such as condoms and diaphragms that prevent sperm from reaching an egg cell.
- Spermicidal agents - chemicals that kill or disable sperm cells.
- Surgical methods of male or female sterilisation.
- Not having vaginal sex at times when an egg may be in one of the fallopian tubes.