Contraceptive Counseling

This is a **free service** that utilizes contraceptive counselors to educate patients about their birth control options based on their personal health history and goals for contraception. It is run through the 2nd floor Continuity Care Clinic in coordination with Dr. Balbo and Dr. Duval. Please call 740.592.7100 to schedule your appointment.

This is a great option for people who:

- are considering **starting or switching to a new method.** Counselors offer individualized recommendations to help patients decide which method would be the best fit for them.
- would like an **implant or IUD.** This visit can expedite the process for verifying if the patient’s insurance will cover the cost of the device. The counselors can also help the patient plan the timing of the insertion based on other factors such as their period and the method of birth control they currently use. It can decrease the number of visits to the clinic and the number of visits the patients has to pay for.
- want more information about contraceptive options without having to pay for a visit and without the visit showing up on their insurance***
- want greater appointment availability or more time for discussing birth control options

There is no charge for contraceptive counseling which includes discussing information about contraceptive options, helping someone check with their insurance to find out if an implant or IUD is covered, or planning for an IUD or implant insertion.

***However, if after discussing their options, a patient chooses to start pills, patches, rings, or the shot, we would **bill insurance if the patient wants a prescription.** Contraceptive counselors are not able to write prescriptions, so one of the doctors would see the patient at the end of their contraceptive counseling visit and provide the prescription. This will allow the patient to receive their prescription the same day without having to return another day. However, it would add a doctor visit, so a fee would apply. Patients will be informed that it would be billed to their insurance and given the option to proceed with a doctor visit for a prescription or not.

This visit is not a substitute for an annual well person exam. It is a resource for information specifically about contraception, but does not address the full scope of topics covered in an annual exam. Someone may have a contraceptive counseling visit to get more information prior to their annual exam, but it is not a replacement for an annual exam. This is **not** the best option for people who are happy with their birth control pills/patches/ring/depo and would just like a **refill the same method.** For those people, it is best to schedule an annual exam as usual with a provider.

**Overview of what patients can expect during a contraceptive counseling visit**

- Check in with the receptionist on the 2nd floor of Campus Care
- Fill out intake form
- Go to private room. Check weight, blood pressure, pulse.
- Review intake form with contraceptive counselor
- Counselor will give a general overview of all your options and help you compare how effective the method is, common side effects, possible risks, and additional benefits of the methods to help you determine which is the best fit for you
- The counselor will then briefly leave the room to review the plan of care with one of the doctors.
- They will return to the room and give you more detailed information about the method you chose- when to start, what to expect, when it starts to work, how to verify if your insurance will cover the method, and will answer questions or give resources for more information.

All of the information from these visits is confidential and protected by HIPPA. There is no physical examination or pelvic exam at this visit. You do not have to get undressed. Plan to be at the clinic for about 30-45 minutes.