

BIRTH CONTROL: WE ALL BENEFIT

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Birth control is basic health care that benefits women and families across the country. It benefits the young woman finishing college or starting a career. It benefits the family struggling to make ends meet. It benefits the woman suffering from endometriosis. It benefits the mothers and fathers who planned their families and had children when they were ready. Birth control has had such a dramatic impact on women and families in this country that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) named it one of the top 10 public health achievements of the past century.

Hear how birth control has benefited Americans across the country, and why it's so important that we ensure that birth control be available at no cost to every woman, no matter where she works.

ALABAMA

"I have two daughters in their 20s. One can afford the co-pay for birth control; the other cannot.

- Meagan E., Indian Springs, AL

ALASKA

"As a woman in my mid-twenties, having access to birth control means that I can focus on getting my Masters and starting my career, so that I can give back to my community and support my family--when I'm ready to have one.

- Kime M., Anchorage, AK

ARIZONA

"Without birth control, I could not have worked to help my husband through school and I could not have pursued higher education and a law degree for myself... We planned to have two children and have been able to help them achieve the life they want. More children would have prevented our family from living up to its potential...

- Gail B., Tempe, AZ

ARKANSAS

"For the first time in my life I was able to afford birth control on my own, because my insurance finally covers it.

- Kendall G., Rogers, AZ

CALIFORNIA

"I am a mom of three, working full time AND parenting full time. It is exhausting and kids are EXPENSIVE! I love my kids but I cannot have any more due to finances and the well being of both my career and mental health! Birth control is vital not only to younger women who want to get their careers in place before they start having kids but also to older women who really need to just take care of the kids they already have! Protect affordable and accessible birth control for ALL women!

- Kinsley B., San Francisco, CA

COLORADO

“As a single woman who teaches part time, I have to pay for my own insurance. I have advanced degrees, I am a law-abiding citizen and a proven educator. Birth control coverage is necessary for me because I am trying to plan for the future with my boyfriend and cannot afford any surprises right now. I also support birth control coverage without co-pays because I see my students struggling as single parents. No one should risk their financial future (or the future of their children) because of lack of affordable prevention.

- Patricia E., Denver, CO

CONNECTICUT

“I am a college student struggling to pay the heavy fees that come with an education...When I first started using birth control...[t]o get enough pills to last me through the summer, I had to pay \$40.... It was just another burden that I wish I could have avoided. Birth control helped regulate my menstrual cycle...Now with my new insurance plan under the ACA, I can get it without the extra burden - and live a happier life.

- Sara B., Hartford, CT

DELAWARE

“Many women use birth control not just to prevent pregnancy. Many, including myself, use it for medical reasons such as endometriosis, bleeding disorders, PCOS, irregular or painful periods. Despite whatever reason a woman chooses to use birth control, she should be able to get it at no cost.

- Becky P., Wilmington, DE

D.C.

“As a 20-something with a part time job, this will be one less thing for me to worry about being able to afford. Thanks!!

- Michelle L., Washington, D.C.

GEORGIA

“It has served as the only way for my wife to manage her menstrual cycle. Also, when the time comes I would like it to be available and affordable for my daughter through whatever health insurance provider we are on.

- Dameon T., Atlanta, GA

FLORIDA

“Before the ACA, my insurance company considered OB/GYNs "specialists;" therefore, the copay was high and lab work was not covered. Additionally, the birth control that was covered was listed as a third tier prescription- meaning I paid \$60 a month. Last week I saw my doctor for my annual exam, and had no copay or lab bill. Yesterday I picked up the first of my new annual prescription and paid nothing! This will save me around \$900 a year, which is significant for a young, married professional.

- Ivy B., Panama City Beach, FL

HAWAII

“Part of taking responsibility for ourselves and our families is to have children when we are ready and able to care for them. Preventing unwanted pregnancies helps everyone. What would our society be like if all children were wanted and well cared for? My son was planned and it made such a difference. My choice, my responsibility.

- Angelina K., Kailua, HI

IDAHO

“I'm a poor college student who's learning to do a whole lot of good in this world! But I cannot do that if I can't plan parenthood. Baby on hip does not equal pre-med degree. Ha!

- Madeline G., Boise, ID

KANSAS

“Birth control made it possible for my husband and me to complete medical school and residency and have our 2 children at a time in our lives when we were ready for them. We were lucky to be able to afford birth control at the time; not everyone is. The ACA improves access...and allows more women and families to have the ability to plan their family as we were able to.

- Abbey R., Salina, KS

INDIANA

“Without birth control, I would have probably become pregnant at an early age, with an unwanted child, and no career. Because of Planned Parenthood and birth control, I was able to become a nurse and have a great family when I was ready!

- Michelle F., Crown Point, IN

IOWA

“As a self-employed business owner, I don't want to have to worry about an unplanned pregnancy. Every little bit helps with expenses!! I never understood why insurance companies would cover things like Viagra for men, but yet do nothing in helping prevent unwanted or unplanned pregnancies.

- Jane S., Colo, IA

ILLINOIS

“Co-pay free birth control allows me to save money monthly and put towards other necessities needed! I have a high deductible health plan that is very costly in and of itself. Paying an additional co-pay on top of my monthly rate would make birth control unaffordable. Birth control is a priority in my life as I a working young professional who is not in a place financially where I could afford a child. I also rely on my birth control for health purposes as well. Unaffordable birth control would certainly impact my life in several ways!

- Michelle K., Savoy, IL

MASSACHUSETTS

“I used birth control to combat tremendous pain in my twenties. Had I not been covered, I would have been unable to afford this medication and my quality of life would have decreased -- as every month I would have faced debilitating pain... My co-pays at the time, though relatively small, were still a struggle to meet every month on a student's income. I support birth control coverage without co-pays for women like myself in need of financial and medical assistance, and I support it because I believe the health and maintenance of a woman's body is essential to a functioning society.

- Eleni H., Brookline, MA

LOUISIANA

“Birth control has made it possible to work as much as I do and live the quality of life that I choose for myself. I am so thankful for it and Planned Parenthood.

- Kate L., New Orleans, LA

MAINE

“For me, and for many women like me, this is not only a reproductive issue; it's a basic health issue. Before going on birth control to regulate my cycle, I became desperately ill every month with headaches, nausea, and fainting. Birth control makes it possible for me to remain healthy and function in my everyday life, and I need healthcare coverage that makes it available and affordable.

- Sarah D., Windham, ME

MARYLAND

“Birth control is expensive, plain and simple. I was unemployed for a length of time due to the poor economy and struggled to find the \$30/month to pay for generic. I now work two jobs that don't offer health insurance and still struggle to find the \$30 each month to pay but I do it because I am responsible. I don't want to become pregnant and I deserve this benefit for being a responsible, as should any and every woman.

- Joanna L., New Market, MD

KENTUCKY

“As a college student who uses contraceptives for hormone therapy, coverage without co-pays means that I can spend money on school instead of medication.

- Elizabeth S., Inez, KY

MICHIGAN

“I work full time and attend grad school. I have student loans to pay off. It is very important to my husband and me (both Catholic) to have access to birth control so that we can carefully plan for our future family. I also have a chronic illness and deal with daily pain issues. Birth control helps to make my cycle easier to handle with my existing condition.

- Maggie M., Lansing, MI

MISSOURI

“My 23 yr. old daughter's job was reduced to part-time hrs, thus making birth control all the more expensive for her to afford. Luckily, under Obamacare, she is still covered under her father's insurance & under Obamacare, her birth control pills are no cost to her. Not only would she have had difficulty affording birth control, but how would she afford a baby if she didn't have birth control? That's just my personal story. How many other twenty something's are in similar situations?”

- Jan B., Pacific, MO

MINNESOTA

“As a woman of nearly 52 years of age, my OB-GYN has prescribed birth control pills for me as part of my treatment for peri-menopausal symptoms. It is highly unlikely that I would become pregnant at my age, but it is still physically possible. I appreciate the fact that I have access to birth control for both reasons. And the last time I picked up my prescription, it was absolutely free of charge!”

- Lori J., Eden Prairie, MN

MONTANA

“I'm a struggling post-college freelance designer. My income fluctuates, and I often don't have an extra \$45 for a co-pay if there's an emergency or I'm going through a dry spell financially. I'm not ready to be a parent. When I get to the point at which I can amply support myself and my business is steady, I may consider a family.”

- Aurora W., Kalispell, MT

MISSISSIPPI

“I have two daughters who I want to have a choice. Affordable birth control is a must to prevent unwanted pregnancies until they both decide they are ready to have a family. These pills are very expensive for people who are on a budget and also going to school....Birth control should be accessible and affordable!”

- Maude S C., Sumner, MS

NEW JERSEY

“I'm 23 and recently married to the love of my life. We both have piles of student loans and other bills to pay, and as young professionals every penny counts. I'm so relieved to not have to worry about the possibility of getting pregnant with a child I can't support.”

- Ariel H., Ridgewood, NJ

NEBRASKA

“When I was a high school student, even before being sexually active, birth control pills helped myself and many of my friends with debilitating cramps and mood swings. Today it helps me plan for a future I can afford, without unplanned pregnancies which, as an unemployed graduate student, would derail my academic and financial future...”

- Jessica M., Lincoln, NE

NORTH DAKOTA

“I've seen girls at my school who have become pregnant because they didn't have birth control. I've also seen girls who have prevented pregnancy and gone on to accomplish their dreams because of birth control.”

- Rachael G., Fargo, ND

NEVADA

“My IUD had a \$600 copay before the Affordable Care Act was passed -- which was completely out of my price range. Thanks to the act I did not have to pay anything at all and my husband and I don't have to worry that an unplanned pregnancy will hold us back from graduating college next spring.

- Samantha T., Reno, NV

NEW HAMPSHIRE

“As a woman in her early 30's in graduate school who wishes to have children soon (Just engaged!), I have gone on hormonal birth control for the first time with the ACA. An unintended pregnancy now would be devastating to me; I would have to choose between school or a child, and that is a choice that would undo me. I am so grateful that my birth control is affordable and accessible. I will be happy to have a professional degree that is employable when I start my family!

- Mollie F., Newmarket, NH

NEW YORK

“My girlfriend and I are both public-school teachers in Harlem. Which means that while we're devoted to educating the children of our community, rent prices are currently preventing us from being able to afford our own family. Birth control means that we can be better teachers now and better parents later.

- Christopher B., New York, NY

NORTH CAROLINA

“When I was in my 20s, I put birth control on my credit card because I couldn't afford to pay my bills, feed myself and stay on birth control on my minimum wage income. It took years to pay off the debt I racked up. I don't want to see a younger generation of women have to make those kinds of decisions just because they're trying to be responsible and healthy.

- Joey F., Chapel Hill, NC

OHIO

“It is already saving me money. I will save \$120/year on co-pays, and this would have been a huge help to me when I had no insurance. I don't make a lot of money as a graduate student taking care of four people on one person's paycheck, so anything helps.

- Kay C., Columbus, OH

NEW MEXICO

“As a college student who works full time at a low-paying job, I don't have a lot of money, nor do I have the time to give birth or raise a child right now. I was on hormonal birth control (the pill, specifically) for over a year because it was the only affordable option under my health care plan. The Paragard IUD, which I had wanted from the beginning, was barely covered, and would cost me several hundred dollars out of pocket, which I didn't have. The ACA finally gave me the option to get my Paragard and get off of hormones. Thanks to the ACA, I have my emotional health back and can use the birth control method that's best for me.

- Katy H., Albuquerque, NM

SOUTH CAROLINA

“Without birth control, I'd never be able to get through college. Also, it does more than prevent unwanted pregnancies. Without it, every month I would spend one entire week in severe pain. This not only regulates my period but helps me function in my everyday life. Any boss who refuses to cover this for their employees might as well just own up and say they don't care about their employees or their ability to work.

- Jesse M., Cayce, SC

OKLAHOMA

“I am so grateful that President Obama sees the vital importance of proper healthcare for women including increased access to affordable birth control. This change is significant for me in that I will now save \$120 a year. When you make \$35,000 a year that makes a difference.

- Lisa P., Oklahoma City, OK

OREGON

“In 2007 I had a \$300 copay for my birth control device. This year when I had it replaced it was fully covered. Since it is a regular fact of life that I have to periodically replace it like getting vaccines and other regular preventative health procedures, this makes all kinds of sense.

- Anna S., Portland, OR

PENNSYLVANIA

“I am a young woman who is happily married to my college sweetheart. I'm so proud that we live in a country where we can take charge of planning our family, and that I'm afforded the opportunity to work toward my career and enjoy time with just my husband before having children. As recent college grads, we don't have a lot of money, and measures like the ACA ensure that I can continue to take charge of my future!

- Kara C., Philadelphia, PA

RHODE ISLAND

“I have and know adults in their 20's living on their own who can not afford the food on their table at times and they are wisely waiting to have children when they are more financially able to afford them.

- Nancy D., Wakefield, RI

SOUTH DAKOTA

“I am a young adult. All of my friends are young, mature, responsible adults. We are all committed to the use and promotion of birth control, because we are all mature and responsible enough to know that we are not ready to have children. We are also not the richest of people and buying whatever our preferred method of birth control is can sometimes be a financial hardship, even with copays and assistance programs. We want control over our futures, and in this world where almost nothing is in our control, at the very least we want to control when and if we start a family.

- Sarah H., Rapid City, SD

TEXAS

“It would not have been possible for me to earn multiple degrees and have the job as an educator I now hold. I still have substantial student loan debt and not having to pay for birth control is a relief; I also have multiple health issues and must take some medications that include steep co-pays. I was also raised Catholic. In a perfect world there would be no unwanted pregnancies and access to birth control for all women is a decisive step in that direction.

- Jean Marie D., Plano, TX

UTAH

“I am a graduate student who is working on my PhD in cancer biology. As a graduate student we have a small stipend and have poor health insurance. However, with the Affordable Care Act, now I am able to get birth control. Thanks to birth control, I am able to continue my schooling and further our knowledge about cancer formation.

- Shelly S., Salt Lake City, UT

VERMONT

“At least two of my close friends and I have recently begun to get our birth control for free, after years of having to pay increasingly unaffordable co-pays. It lessens our financial, physical and mental stresses knowing that our preferred method of contraception is both affordable and easily attainable, and knowing that it is readily available and free from expensive co-pays allows us to spend our time and money in other areas of our life -- like putting more money towards paying off our student debt.

Casey P., Burlington, VT

VIRGINIA

“As a military dependent wife, I had free medical care with birth control when I needed it. We had the two children we wanted and could care for...WHEN we wanted them and felt we could afford them. It was only a part of our medical care, but it was a very important and essential part. I didn't think about the privilege at the time; it was just there when I needed it. Now, I think, ‘how absurd that all women don't have this vital medical coverage available to them!’

- Karen F., Bealeton, VA

WASHINGTON

“I have been on birth control pills for the past 9 years, used to treat extreme menstrual pain. Since...the ACA, I haven't had to worry about co-pays for receiving my birth control every month. And this has made my life much easier. Birth control is not just used for preventing pregnancy, sometimes women need it to treat a variety of health problems. And it plays an important role in my daily life.

- Jessica W., Shoreline, WA

WEST VIRGINIA

“As a student on a limited income, children are really not yet an option for my husband and me. We are both doctoral students studying aerospace engineering, and having a child right now would put a stop to all of that. Our success depends on waiting to have children until our studies are complete. Not to mention that we could not afford children on our current income or health insurance. Access to birth control is all the difference to us!

- Jennifer W., Morgantown, WV

TENNESSEE

“I'm 29 years old. I've been on birth control pills since I was 17 when I started developing ovarian cysts. I now have endometriosis. If I'm even 12 hours late taking my pill my uterus freaks out and I go through hell. I wish people understood that for some people these pills are vital whether they are sexually active or not. Birth control pills may be preventing me from having surgery. Even if I didn't need them I'd still use them as a form of prevention, but the pills I'm on for endometriosis now are more expensive. Even with insurance I was paying quite about \$400 a year. I also have other health problems and doctors bills to deal with. When I was surprised by my pharmacist and told I was suddenly paying \$0 I was thrilled! It's nice to get a break.

- Elaine S., Knoxville, TN

WISCONSIN

“I am a student trying to finish up my Bachelor's degree. I do not have the time nor the extra money to have children right now. Birth control with no co-pays allows me to better plan when I am ready to start a family and also greatly reduces any unexpected, unwanted surprises like pregnancy.

- Stacey H., Milwaukee, WI

WYOMING

“I am an unmarried 35 year old woman in a wonderful relationship. I do not want to have children. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, I do not need to pay \$98/month for the form of birth control I choose (Nuva ring)... I can now pay for forms of preventative health care (skin cancer screenings, blood screenings, etc) and other health care procedures (dental and vision).

- Abbie B., Jackson, WY