



For Immediate Release

July 2, 2025

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Protecting Health & Empowering Choice: The Importance of Dual Contraception

In an effort to promote comprehensive reproductive health, Polk County Public Health is raising awareness about the importance and benefits of dual contraception — the practice of using two methods of birth control simultaneously, typically a barrier method (such as condoms, dental dams) alongside a hormonal or long-acting method (like the pill, IUD, patch, Depo shot, vaginal ring, or implant).

Dual contraception offers protection on two fronts:

1. **Prevention of Unintended Pregnancy:** When used correctly, combining contraceptive methods greatly enhances effectiveness. For example, pairing condoms with a hormonal method significantly reduces the risk of unintended pregnancy.
2. **Protection Against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs):** While methods like the pill or implant prevent pregnancy, only condoms offer protection against STIs. Using condoms along with another contraceptive method helps ensure comprehensive sexual health. STI testing is recommended yearly or with each new partner.

Additionally, it's important to recognize the role of other barrier methods such as dental dams for oral and anal sex. These methods help protect against STIs that can be transmitted through oral-genital contact. Promoting their use expands awareness and supports a broader approach to safer sex practices for all individuals, including those in same-sex relationships.

Where to Access Protection

While local pharmacies and businesses often carry condoms and other barrier methods, accessing them can present challenges—especially for adolescents, who may face concerns about cost, privacy, or stigma. Free condoms and barrier methods (including dental dams) are available at Polk County Public Health offices. Residents can also stop by Polk County Public Health offices to

learn where they can access free or low-cost contraception, STI prevention barriers, and STI testing.

Why It Matters

Adolescents, young adults, and individuals with multiple partners are particularly encouraged to consider dual protection. In addition to health benefits, it fosters open conversations between partners, supports reproductive autonomy, and aligns with public health goals of reducing STI transmission and unintended pregnancies.

Dual contraception is a simple but powerful tool in promoting both personal and public health. Polk County Public Health encourages everyone to speak with their healthcare provider about options that align with their values and lifestyle.

For more information about reproductive health services or to speak with a Sexual and Reproductive Health Nurse please call or text 218-280-1117. Our services are low-cost or free and always confidential.

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