Adolescent contraceptive use
DATA FROM LA ENCUESTA DEMOGRÁFICA Y DE SALUD DE REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA (ENDESARD), 2013

Adolescent population: who are they?

In the Dominican Republic, there are over 2 million adolescents aged 10–19 years – 19.0% of the country’s total population. The majority of adolescents live in urban areas, 78.6% of adolescent girls and 77.0% of adolescent boys.

By age 19, the mean number of years of schooling attended by adolescent girls is 11.0, while for adolescent boys it is 9.8. Among adolescents who become mothers before age 20, the average age at which Dominican adolescent girls have their first baby is 17.0 years.

Sexual activity and marital status

Analysis of data from the ENDESARD shows that nearly 440,000 Dominicans aged 15–19 are currently sexually active – they are either unmarried and have had sex in the last three months or they are in a union (i.e. married or living together). On average, among adolescents who had sex before age 20, adolescent girls first have sexual intercourse at age 16.1 years and adolescent boys at 15.2 years.

Among unmarried adolescents, 32.2% of adolescent girls report ever having sex and 24.5% are currently sexually active; among adolescent boys, 57.7% report ever having sex, while 41.0% are currently sexually active.

Among all Dominican adolescents, 20.5% of adolescent girls and 3.8% of adolescent boys are in a union. Among these adolescents, the mean age of the first union is 16.2 years for adolescent girls and 17.4 for adolescent boys.

What can be done to support Dominican adolescents to prevent unintended pregnancy?

Plan for how, when and where different groups of sexually active adolescents (married and unmarried, boys and girls, rural and urban) use and do not use contraception.

Learn the reasons why adolescents are not using contraception, and develop policies and programmes to better address their needs.

Understand that adolescents may get contraception from a variety of sources and ensure that each of these sources can provide high quality services for adolescents.
Contraceptive use and non-use among adolescent girls

Unmarried, sexually active

According to ENDESARD\(^\text{ii}\) analyses, 71.5\% of unmarried, sexually active adolescent girls report not wanting a child in the next two years, and 58.1\% of them are currently using a method to prevent pregnancy. The main reasons these adolescents report for not using a contraceptive method include:

- infrequent sex (37.6\%)
- not married (19.6\%)
- not having sex (15.7\%)

Among all unmarried, sexually active adolescent girls aged 15–19, 43.8\% are not using a method of contraception. Male condoms and pills are the most common modern methods used (25.9\% and 16.2\% of these adolescent girls, respectively), and injectable contraceptives are used by 7.3\%. IUDs, which are considered to be one of the most effective methods, are used by 0.9\%. Withdrawal or periodic abstinence, traditional methods, are used by 4.3\% (see Figure 1).

In union

According to ENDESARD\(^\text{ii}\) analyses, 67.1\% of adolescent girls in a union report not wanting a child in the next two years, and 62.9\% of them are currently using a method to prevent pregnancy. The main reasons these adolescents report for not using a contraceptive method include:

- menses has not returned after giving birth (22.9\%)
- infrequent sex (17.1\%)
- fear of side-effects or health concerns (11.4\%)

Among all adolescent girls in a union aged 15–19, 45.5\% are not using a method of contraception. Pills and injectable contraceptives are the most common modern methods used (30.7\% and 13.4\% of these adolescent girls, respectively). IUDs and implants, which are among the most effective methods, are used by 1.0\% and 0.7\% respectively. Female sterilization, a permanent method, is used by 0.2\%. Traditional methods (withdrawal or periodic abstinence) are used by 2.7\% of these adolescent girls (see Figure 2).

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Adolescent contraceptive use
ANALYSIS OF LA ENCUESTA DEMOGRÁFICA Y DE SALUD DE REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA, 2013

Among adolescents who had sex before age 20, the average age at first sex is

- 16.1 years for adolescent girls
- 15.2 years for adolescent boys

Among adolescents who become parents before age 20, the average age at first birth is

- 17.0 for adolescent girls

What can be done to support Dominican adolescents to prevent unintended pregnancy?

Plan for how, when, and where different groups of adolescents use or don’t use contraception.

Learn the reasons why adolescents are not using contraception.

Report not wanting a child in the next two years

Main reasons for not using contraception

Sexually active, unmarried

- 37.6% infrequent sex
- 19.6% not married
- 15.7% not having sex

In union

- 22.9% menses has not returned after giving birth
- 17.1% infrequent sex
- 11.4% fear of side-effects or health concerns

Understand that adolescents may get modern contraception from a variety of sources.

- 46.1% from a pharmacy
- 28.1% from a government facility

Use and non-use of contraception adolescent girls, aged 15-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sexually active, unmarried</th>
<th>In union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not using</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodic abstinence</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male condom</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pill</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injectable contraceptives</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lactational amenorrhea (LAM)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implants</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUD</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female sterilization</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


LEARN MORE AT who.int/reproductivehealth/adol-contraceptive-use
**REASONS FOR NON-USE:**

- Not married
- Not having sex
- Infrequent sex
- Menses has not returned after birth
- Breastfeeding
- Fatalistic (up to god)
- She is opposed
- Husband/partner is opposed
- Religious prohibition
- Knows no method
- Knows no source
- Fear of side effects/health concerns
- Inconvenient to use
- Others opposed
- Lack of access/too far

**SOURCE OF METHOD:**

- Government facility
- Private facility
- Pharmacy
- Shop
- Friends or parents
- Other
- Community Health Worker