



Bixby Center
for Global
Reproductive
Health

UCSF

University of California
San Francisco

Better birth control education reduces unintended pregnancies

A University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) study in *The Lancet* medical journal (June 2015) showed that an education and counseling intervention successfully reduced unintended pregnancy among teens and young women aged 18-25 years. Each year, **nearly half of pregnancies are unintended in the US**—far higher than in similar countries—despite the fact that we have the tools to prevent them. UCSF developed a training curriculum that gave health care providers the skills to educate young women about the range of FDA-approved contraceptive methods, including highly effective IUDs and implants. In partnership with Planned Parenthood, we tested our curriculum in a randomized trial at 40 health centers nationwide.

This randomized clinic intervention was the first to successfully help women prevent accidental pregnancies.

Study findings

Our training reduced unintended pregnancies for women seeking family planning care through better access to highly effective birth control.

- **Unintended pregnancies** among young women visiting family planning clinics **dropped by nearly half**—from 15 to 8 per 100 women over a year.

When providers educated women on all birth control methods, many women chose IUDs or implants.

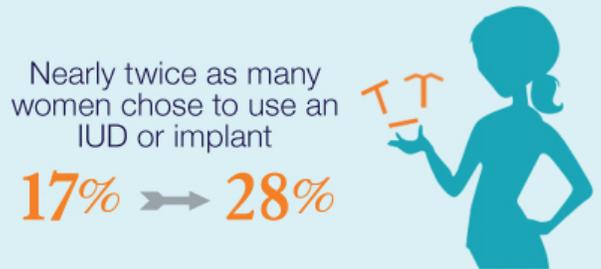
- Virtually all women visiting clinics learned about the pill, but **only 39% at control clinics learned about IUDs and implants compared to 71% at trained clinics.**
- 17% of women in control clinics chose an IUD or implant compared with 28% at the trained clinics.

Our study finds...



Nearly twice as many women were educated on IUDs and implants by their health care provider

39% → **71%**



Half as many family planning clients had unplanned pregnancies

15 → **8** per 100 women

...all while supporting a woman's freedom to choose the method that works for her.

- For women seeking post-abortion contraception, fewer than half who were interested in IUDs and implants actually received their selected method—even at trained sites. There are many cost barriers to birth control at the time of abortion in the US.

The training supported a woman's ability to choose the birth control that works best for her.

- Over 99% of women reported that they chose their birth control method themselves or together with their provider.

Effective education

Too many US women lack information and quality reproductive health care. Modern intrauterine devices (IUDs) and the single-rod implant are highly effective, safe and easy-to-use contraceptive options. But providers don't routinely educate women on IUDs and implants due to issues such as lack of training, out-of-date information, and billing or cost concerns.

Our innovative program

Beyond the Pill, a program of the UCSF Bixby Center for Global Reproductive Health, is pioneering new approaches to contraceptive care. Our accredited training curriculum is a replicable and cost-effective way to advance clinical skills, support reproductive autonomy and reduce unintended pregnancies.

Our training intervention

This half-day CME/CE-accredited training helps providers integrate IUDs and implants into routine contraceptive care by improving method-specific knowledge and counseling and placement skills.

Key features:

- Up-to-date science and professional guidelines on IUDs and implants
- Patient-centered counseling skills, emphasizing shared decision-making
- IUD placement skills for clinicians
- Tailored sessions for all clinic staff
- Visual aids and counseling tools
- Accredited by UCSF School of Medicine

40 Sites in Our National Study



Twenty randomly selected clinics received the training and 20 control clinics offered standard care.

Contact us

For general information:

Lia Garman
Program Analyst
Lia.Garman@ucsf.edu
415/476-4911

For training information:

Abigail Smith, MPH
Training Coordinator
Abigail.Smith@ucsf.edu
415/502-0331

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A program of the UCSF Bixby Center
Telephone: 415/476-4911
beyondthepill.ucsf.edu



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