

# AMA Journal of Ethics®

August 2022, Volume 24, Number 8: E804-805

## ART OF MEDICINE

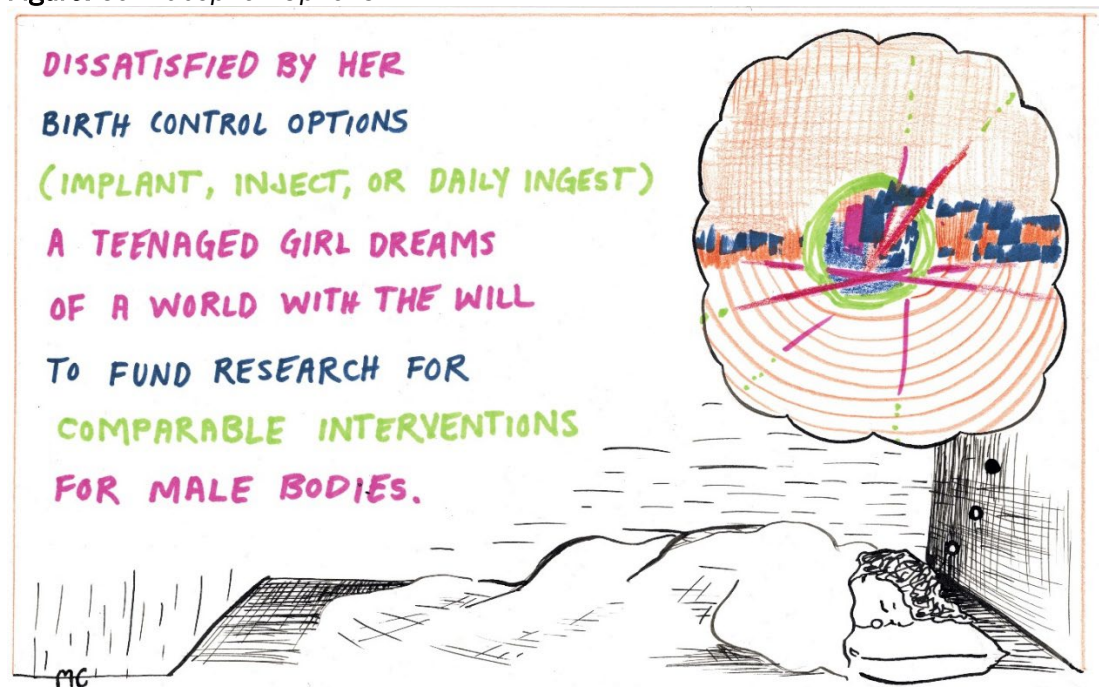
### Contraception Options

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#### Abstract

*Contraception Options* considers the general social and cultural expectation and norm that women's bodies should be the sites of contraception. The comic represents frustration with inequitable distribution of contraceptive burden.

Figure. *Contraception Options*



#### Media

Marker and pen on paper, 9" x 6".

Gender equity and sex-positivity movements have delivered several distinct, effective contraception options: implant, inject, or daily ingest. No longer are women leashed to a

cycle of trepidation, relief, trepidation. Contraception offers women control over their reproductive capacity. A variety of contraceptive options means a woman can choose among methods' fit in her life. She considers questions such as these: *Is her routine regular enough to ingest a pill every day at the same time? Does she want to have a device implanted in her uterus or arm? Can she stand an intramuscular (IM) injection every 3 months?* (An IM injection requires a 1" to 1.5" needle, about which clinicians should warn their patients.) To receive an IM injection or pill, she must be able travel to a clinic or pharmacy at least every 3 months, or monthly. An implanted device requires making peace with a subdermal plastic rod. With all options, **iatrogenic effects** (eg, side effects and interactions with other medications) must also be considered.

All these options are preferable to and more realistic than abstinence or blind prayer. But each asks only women to take on risk, responsibility, or discomfort. Access to safe, effective contraception, which benefits everyone, came with new burdens **unilaterally borne by women**. Progress on gender equity means shifting contraceptive burden to equitably distribute all risks and benefits of sexual relationships. Currently, barring physical barrier methods, contraception and its risks are borne exclusively by women.

The character in the comic, a teenage girl of reproductive age, symbolizes her and other girls' and women's desires for equity in family planning and reproductive agency.

**Michaela Chan** is a graduate student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in Illinois, and her comics start as questions, songs, and conversations.

#### Citation

*AMA J Ethics*. 2022;24(8):E804-805.

#### DOI

10.1001/amajethics.2022.804.

#### Conflict of Interest Disclosure

The author(s) had no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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