

Discover your edge

Thursday, 12 November 2015

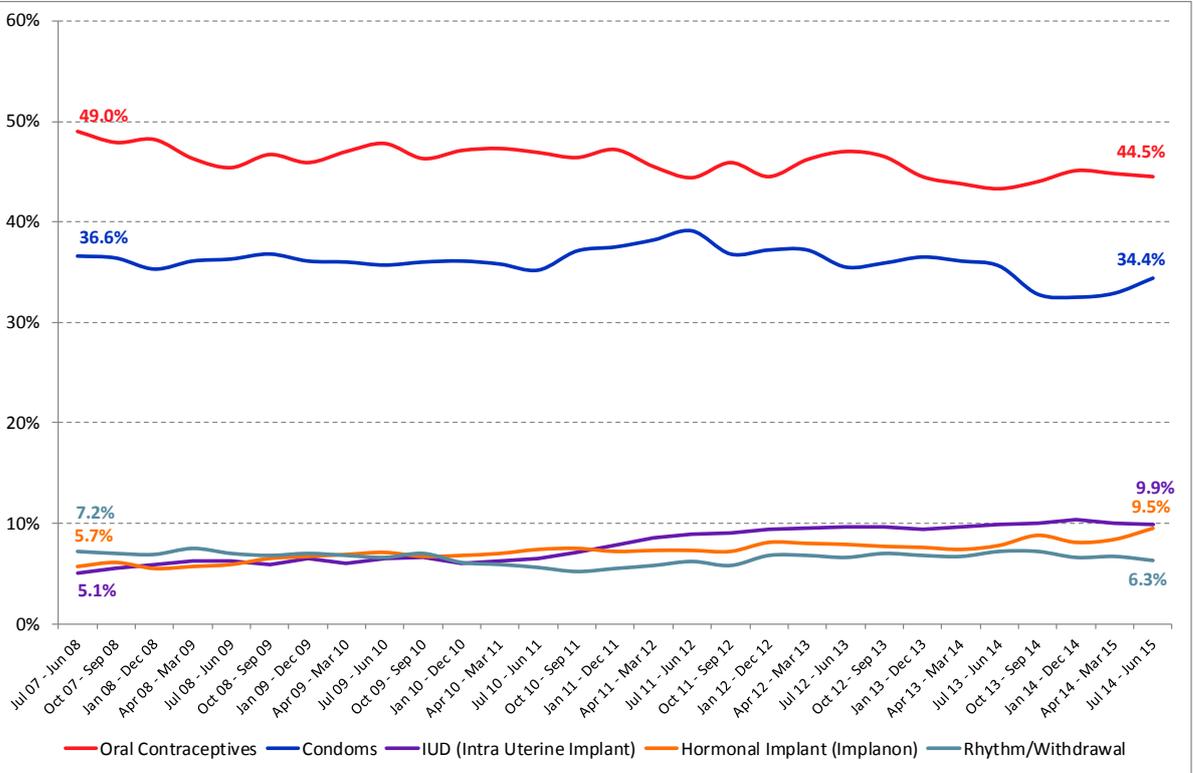
# ‘Set and forget’: a new era of women’s contraception

Currently, just over 2.5 million Australian women between the ages of 18 and 49 use some form of contraception. The oral contraceptive pill remains by far the most popular method, although its usage has declined somewhat, the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research show. Condoms have also lost ground over the last few years (but are showing signs of recovery), while the use of IUDs and hormonal implants has grown.

In the 12 months to June 2008, almost half (49.0%) of Australian women who used contraception reported taking the Pill as their primary method of birth control. Seven years later, that figure has slipped to 44.5%. Over the same period, the proportion using condoms as their primary contraceptive method has also decreased, from 36.6% to 34.4% (hitting a low point of 32.5% in December 2014).

Among the other forms of contraception, IUDs have seen a substantial uptake, being the choice of 9.9% of female contraception users in Australia (almost double the proportion using them back in 2008). Hormonal implants such as Implanon have also gained more users, and now account for 9.5% of Australian women on birth control.

The five most popular contraception methods used by Australian women



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), July 2007 – June 2015 (n=16,443). Base: Australian women 18-49 who use contraception (NB: Only the 5 most popular methods of the 10 measured are shown.)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## *A new generation*

The rise of hormonal implants appears to be due primarily to their burgeoning uptake among younger women. Among 18-24 year-olds, for example, the proportion of contraceptive-users who opt for hormonal implants is now 14.2% (up from 7.2% in 2008). In contrast, this age group's use of condoms as their main method of birth control has fallen from 44.6% to 34.5%, and the proportion taking the Pill has decreased from 57.4% to 53.5%.

Among 35-49 year-olds, IUDs have seen a similar surge in use, rising from 8.5% to 15.5% of women from this age bracket who use contraception. The proportion of this group using condoms has also increased slightly (from 32.4% to 34.4%) but usage of the Pill has dipped (from 39.3% to 36.1%).

The Pill's popularity has also declined among women aged 25-34 (the age group most likely to use contraception), as more opt for IUDs and hormonal implants as their main form of birth control.

### **Michele Levine, CEO, Roy Morgan Research, says:**

*"Our data shows some subtle yet undeniable trends in contraception use by Australian women in recent years. While more than three-quarters (78.9%) of Aussie women 18-49 who use contraception opt for either the Pill or condoms, there has been a subtle shift away from them in favour of IUDs and hormonal implants.*

*"As revolutionary as the Pill was when it was introduced in the 1960s, it does require a commitment from the user to take it every day, whereas hormonal implants and IUDs are much less demanding. Once fitted by a doctor, it's basically a matter of 'set and forget'.*

*"Contraception has come a long way since the Pill was launched, and Australian women now have a much wider range of possibilities to choose from. Obviously, factors such as potential side effects, efficiency and convenience all play a role in which method a woman chooses; and it is important for GPs prescribing this kind of medication to take all of these factors into account..."*

**For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research's health data – including detailed profiles of women on different forms of contraception, please contact:**

**Vaishali Nagaratnam**

Office: +61 (3) 9224 5309

[Vaishali.Nagaratnam@roymorgan.com](mailto:Vaishali.Nagaratnam@roymorgan.com)

### **Related research findings**

View our range of [Pharmacy Product buyer profiles](#), including the [Condom buyer profile](#) as well as our [Feminine Products profiles](#).

Compiled with data from Roy Morgan's Single Source survey (the largest of its kind in the world, with 50,000 respondents p.a), these ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

## About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

## Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2