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The Noble Presence of the Protector and Grand Marja' of the Shi`a, Ayatullah al-`Uzma Shirazi

In His Name, the Most High

Question: With greetings and respect to you. It is common place that in order for women to prevent unwanted pregnancies and in order to avoid having an abortion when their life is in danger, with the consent of their husband, they use medication or things such as birth control pills, I.U.D. (an item that is inserted into the womb), cervical cap, diaphragm, creams, jells and injections – all of which prevent the meeting and fertilization of the egg.

Men too, with the consent of their wives, make use of the condom (a plastic covering) and also employ the method of coitus interruptus (to prevent an unwanted pregnancy).

We would like to know what the Islamic ruling is on these things that we have mentioned in our letter.

And may the peace and mercy of Allah and His blessings be upon you.

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Answer: Using birth control pills and injections and other things such as this or even the cervical cap or anything that would prevent the fertilization of the egg and in addition, using the condom – either with or without the consent of the wife or husband, is not a problem.

However, using anything that would result in the sterility of the man or the womb of the woman, either with or without the consent of either side (the husband or the wife) is forbidden (haram). And Allah knows best.

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