

There is so much we don't know in medicine that could make a difference, and often we focus on the big things, and the little things get forgotten. To highlight some smaller but important issues, we've put together a series of pearls that the Red Whale found at the bottom of the ocean of knowledge!

## Comparing contraceptive efficacy

Efficacy of a contraceptive method depends on a number of factors including fertility and age of a woman, correct usage of method, and inherent strengths of the method.

### Failure rates

Effectiveness of contraception is typically presented in terms of failure rates.

- Perfect use failure rate: the number of pregnancies occurring when the method is used consistently and correctly at all times.
- Typical use failure rate: the number of pregnancies occurring when the method is used both correctly and incorrectly, reflecting contraceptive practice in real life.
- Some methods have similar perfect and typical use failure rates (e.g. IUD) because the method is not user-dependent. Other methods (e.g. abstinence) have very different perfect and typical use failure rates.

### Pearl index

Historically, contraceptive efficacy was measured by the Pearl index. The Pearl index is defined as the number of pregnancies occurring per 100 women years (where a woman year is defined as 13 menstrual cycles).

The drawback of the Pearl index is that it doesn't allow for the change in pregnancy risk which occurs naturally over time in a given cohort of women.

### Life table methods

Modern contraceptive researchers tend to use 'life table techniques' which calculate cumulative failure rates over a specified time-frame. They present failure rate as number of pregnancies per 100 women years, standardised by yearly cut-off points (usually 1, 3 or 5y).

### Trussell's table

The table below shows the current estimates of the 1y life table perfect, and typical use failure rates for currently available methods of contraception (adapted from Contraception 2011;83:397).

Method	Typical use (% of women experiencing unintended pregnancy at 1y)	Perfect use (% of women experiencing unintended pregnancy at 1y)
No method	85	85
Spermicide	28	18
Withdrawal	22	4
Natural family planning	24	0.4–5

Female condom	21	5
Male condom	18	2
Diaphragm	12	6
Combined hormonal methods (combined pill, patch and ring)	9	0.3
Progesterone-only pill	9	0.3
Progesterone-only injectables	6	0.2
Copper IUD	0.8	0.6
Mirena IUS	0.2	0.2
Subdermal implant	0.05	0.05
Female sterilisation	0.5	0.5
Male sterilisation	0.15	0.1

In summary:

- User-dependent methods, such as pills and barrier methods, have higher typical use than perfect use failure rates.

- Non-user-dependent methods and long acting reversible contraceptives (LARC) have similar typical to perfect use failure rates, and are more effective than user-dependent methods.
- The subdermal implant is the most effective method – better than sterilisation.



### Comparing contraceptive efficacy

- Contraceptive efficacy is affected by a number of factors including age of woman, natural fertility of user, length of time of use and user dependency of method.
- Failure rates are divided into perfect use failure rate (when a method is used correctly and consistently) and typical use failure rate (reflecting imperfect real life usage).
- Failure rates are presented using 'life table techniques' as cumulative failure rates per 100 women years in a specified time period.
- LARC methods have much lower failure rates than user-dependent short-acting methods.

***We make every effort to ensure the information in these pages is accurate and correct at the date of publication, but it is of necessity of a brief and general nature, and this should not replace your own good clinical judgement, or be regarded as a substitute for taking professional advice in appropriate circumstances. In particular check drug doses, side effects and interactions with the British National Formulary. Save insofar as any such liability cannot be excluded at law, we do not accept any liability for loss of any type caused by reliance on the information in these pages.***

## OUR UPCOMING COURSES

**Our comprehensive one-day update courses for GPs, GP STs, and General Practice Nurses.**

**We do all the legwork to bring you up to speed on the latest issues and guidance.**

### All our courses are:

- Relevant** Developed and presented by practising GPs and immediately relevant to clinical practice.
- Challenging** Stimulating and thought-provoking.
- Unbiased** Completely free from any pharmaceutical company sponsorship.
- Fun!** Humorous and entertaining – without compromising the content!

### Are they for me?

Our courses are designed for:

- GPs, trainers and appraisers preparing for appraisal and revalidation or wanting to keep up to date across the whole field of general practice.
- GP ST1, 2 & 3, looking for the perfect launch pad into general practice and help with AKT and CSA revision.
- GPs who want to be brought up to speed following maternity leave or a career break.
- General Practice Nurses, especially those seeing patients with chronic diseases.

### What's included?

- 6 CPD credits in a lecture-based format, with plenty of time for interaction, humour and video clips, to keep you focussed and awake.
- A printed copy of the relevant handbook including the results of the most important research in primary

# GP-Update

Red Whale



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care over the last 5 years and covering the subjects more extensively than possible in the course.

- 12 months subscription to **www.gpcpd.com**. With three times the content of the handbook, it allows you to capture CPD credits as you read on the site and use it in consultations! It also comes with Focused Learning Activities - Online learning activities to provide evidence for your appraisal and earn hundreds further hours of CPD credits.
- Buffet lunch and refreshments throughout the day!

**What's not included?** Our courses contain NO theorists, NO gurus, NO sponsors, NO reps on the day! Just real-life GPs who will be back at the coal face as soon as the course has finished.

[www.gp-update.co.uk](http://www.gp-update.co.uk)

## OUR UPCOMING COURSES

### The GP Update Course – our flagship course!



With the amount of evidence and literature inundating us, it can be hard to know which bits should change our practice, and how. Our GP presenters summarise and discuss the results of the most important new evidence and guidance, concentrating on what it means to you and your patients in the consulting room tomorrow.

#### 2016

Oxford	Fri 30 Sep
Southampton	Sat 1 Oct
Cardiff	Wed 5 Oct
Exeter	Thur 6 Oct
London	Fri 7 Oct
London	Sat 8 Oct
Leeds	Wed 12 Oct
Liverpool	Thur 13 Oct
Manchester	Fri 14 Oct
Birmingham	Sat 15 Oct
Cambridge	Tue 18 Oct
London	Wed 19 Oct
Nottingham	Thur 20 Oct
Inverness	Wed 2 Nov
Edinburgh	Thur 3 Nov
Glasgow	Fri 4 Nov

#### 2017

London	Fri 10 Mar
London	Sat 11 Mar
Oxford	Thur 16 Mar
Leeds	Fri 17 Mar
Birmingham	Sat 18 Mar
Bristol	Wed 10 May
Exeter	Thur 11 May
London	Fri 12 May
London	Sat 13 May
Newcastle	Wed 17 May
Sheffield	Thur 18 May
Manchester	Fri 19 May
Birmingham	Sat 20 May
Norwich	Tues 23 May

Bedford	Wed 24 May
London	Thur 25 May
Belfast	Wed 7 June

### The Women's Health Update Course

This one-day update is a comprehensive guide to understanding and managing common gynaecological problems in general practice. You will meet “the Fallopian”, a fictitious family with more gynaecological complaints than you can shake a speculum at. Using a case-based approach will give you the skills to manage your female patients in a real surgery.

We aim to make the day fun, interactive as well as educational. You will leave the course feeling more confident, knowledgeable and with a much stronger pelvic floor!!! The day is designed for all GPs and GP STs – not just those with a special interest!

Exeter	Thur 3 Nov
London	Fri 4 Nov
Leeds	Thur 10 Nov
Manchester	Fri 11 Nov

### The Cancer Update Course

Within the next 15 years the need for cancer care will double and you will look after as many cancer survivors as diabetics.

Shared care follow up will become the norm, secondary care will pass responsibility to us.

A key 2015 Lancet Oncology commission paper warned that: “GPs are inadequately trained and resourced to manage the growing demand for cancer care in high income countries”.

Education for GPs was one of their five key recommendations – we can help!

The Cancer Update Course covers many more topics in much more depth than our GP Update Course. It offers you time to reflect and put your cancer learning into practice.

Cancer care is changing – get ahead with the Red Whale Cancer Update Course.

Manchester	Thur 10 Nov
Birmingham	Fri 11 Nov
Cambridge	Thur 17 Nov
London	Fri 18 Nov

## OUR UPCOMING COURSES

### Lead. Manage. Thrive! – The NEW management skills course for GPs.

Sometimes it feels like the thriving GP is an endangered species – demands on limited time and resources have never been higher. Our practices run in ever more complex ways and our teams extend beyond the practice walls. Often we get that instinctive feeling that there must be a better way to do things, but creating the space to make it happen can be difficult.

As usual Red Whale has done all the legwork to bring you a concise, practical and actionable one day course and handbook. Not only have we trawled through lots of relevant management, leadership and development literature, but we have also distilled its content through the lens of real GPs, enabling you to apply it to the reality of your practice.

<b>Leeds</b>	Fri 18 Nov
<b>Birmingham</b>	Sat 19 Nov
<b>Bristol</b>	Fri 25 Nov
<b>Cambridge</b>	Sat 26 Nov

### Our Consultation Skills Courses

One-day small group courses designed for GPs, GP STs and General Practice Nurses.

The courses have a practical focus and lots of engaging exercises allowing delegates to rehearse the most effective consultation behaviours. But don't worry, there won't be any role playing in front of everybody!

### The Telephone Consultation Course

With the increased importance of telephone consultations this course aims to deliver practical skills which can be put to use immediately. The telephone is being used more and more by nurses as well as doctors in primary care, for triage, consultation and follow-up; in the daytime as well as out of hours. Our goal is to help you overcome difficulties and leave you with concrete ideas to enhance your own telephone contacts with patients.

<b>London</b>	Thur 6 Oct
<b>Manchester</b>	Thur 13 Oct

### The Effective Consultation Course

The course focuses on behaviours which enhance effective use of time in the consultation. Efficient consultations reduce clinical risk and lower the risk of complaints and lawsuits. The course uses the rich evidence base on which consultation behaviours enhance effectiveness and how to go about learning them. We focus on actions, and you will leave with many practical tips to use in your consulting room the following day.

<b>Leeds</b>	Wed 5 Oct
<b>London</b>	Fri 25 Nov

### Prices

#### GP Update Course:

GP £195 | GP Registrar £150 | Nurse £150

#### All other courses:

£225 or £210 for members of [www.gpcpd.com](http://www.gpcpd.com)

*(GPCPD members, please log in and then click on the relevant button within the 'Member information' box on the right of the home screen to get your discount code)*

## Red Whale In-House Courses

Did you know that all of our courses can also be run 'in-house' for CCGs, Clinical Groups and STs groups?

#### And don't forget the usual perks of any Red Whale course

- A printed copy of the relevant Handbook covering the results of the most important research in primary care over the last 5 years.
- 12 months subscription to the relevant online CPD tracking tools, home of the Update Handbooks online and CPD tracker system.
- 100% unbiased content and 0% Pharma company sponsorship.

If you would like to discuss running an In-House Course with Red Whale please contact us:

Tel: 0118 960 7077 or email: [info@gp-update.co.uk](mailto:info@gp-update.co.uk)



**GP-Update** | Relevant challenging and fun!  
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