

[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Log in](#)

## Yes, I Can

- [Yes! Mag](#)
- [Know Your Options](#)
- [Ambassadors](#)
- [Speak Out](#)
- [Insights](#)
- [My Story](#)
- [Blog](#)

## Prof Jamiyah: Reaching Out

[Blog](#)

Posted on [April 29, 2011](#)



Dive deep into Professor Jamiyah's heart warming "Reaching Out" to a teenager dealing with an unplanned pregnancy. She highlights the dilemma faced by an uneducated female community on contraception choices, and the importance of making the right decision.

Read more about great [insights](#) by our [online panel of healthcare professionals](#) for a unique angle on sexual health and contraception matters.

---

Last week I saw another teenager in her final month of pregnancy. She wasn't smiling or happy when talking about this pregnancy because it wasn't planned! For the last six months I had seen a few young single mothers to be who never expected to be pregnant in this phase of their life.

As we talked about the situation, I realize that they are very naïve and had poor knowledge of their reproductive health and the consequences of their unprotected sexual activities. They thought that by having sex just once or very early after their period, they would not get pregnant. So, let's talk about this.

Young female adolescents need to be educated on their reproductive health, the choices that they can make and be responsible for their decisions even as they are growing up. This is a big topic but today I would like to talk about making that important decision – whether or not to embark on the sexual debut. It is a big decision for women because of the consequences of that decision. Sex may not equate love. Abstinence till marriage is the ideal goal. However, if that is not possible, then protection should be the goal until a time when you are ready to raise a child.

When a young girl has her first menses, it signals to the world that she is now embarking into the first phase of

her reproductive life. Typically the cycle length ranges between 21 to 35 days, but on average, the cycle length is about 28-30 days. Two weeks prior to her next menstruation, she would ovulate and this ovum will survive for the next 24 hours for the possibility of fertilization.

It is difficult to know exactly when we women ovulate every month. About 10% to 20% of women may know because they may have a sudden burst of pain at the lower part of the abdomen either on the right or left side every month during the process of ovulation. This is called "mittelschmerz" or "ovulation pain", and may last for a few seconds or a minute or two.

To make matters worse, the sperm can stay alive in a woman's reproductive organ for about 5 days! This means that if you have had unprotected sexual intercourse 5 days prior your ovulation (you may think it is within your safe period!), you can still get pregnant. Therefore, since having sex is a spontaneous thing, it makes perfect sense to ensure that you have protection if you don't want to get pregnant.

Women should take control of their own fertility and make informed choices, depending on their readiness to start a family. Life should be filled with experiences and memories that we can reflect on in our golden years. The decision to bring up a child should be planned and not by chance. We owe that responsibility to that unborn child to give them the best that we possibly can. Hence, contraception is important in helping women plan for their family.

There are many myths out there on the use of contraception. Women avoid using effective contraception because of concerns over cancer or the worry of not being able to get pregnant after discontinuing the contraception.

One of the effective modern contraception methods is the oral contraceptive pill. More than 100 million women around the world use this method and there is enough data after 50 years of usage that tells us that women should not worry about using it. Of course it is not completely without risk but it needs to be balanced against the tremendous benefit. Surely, crossing a busy road amid traffic in Kuala Lumpur poses a more substantial risk of dying compared to the pill!

My young patient who is now waiting for the birth of her unplanned child made the decision to keep the child. She has dropped out of school and with no family support, what is in store for her in the near future may be difficult for her to handle. She needs to grow up quickly to be a mother when she still needs the love and care of a mother.

She may have made a mistake but it is our duty to support her and as much as we can, prevent other young adolescents from making the same mistake.

Meanwhile, let's learn more about effective and reliable contraception – it puts the power in women's hands to decide when she is ready to be pregnant. Indeed, motherhood is something that should be enjoyed and cherished.

← My Post-Event Views: Nicole Tan Welcome to Yes, I Can! →

**Leave a Reply**

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked \*

Name \*

Email \*

Website