

Contraception, sterilisation and infertility

INTRODUCTION

The DHSS requested the inclusion of a number of questions on the use of contraception in the 1986 GHS. This subject was covered previously in the 1983 GHS. In 1986 the questions were addressed to all women aged 16-49 regardless of their marital status; in 1983 they had been restricted to women aged 18-44 (or 16-44 if they had been married). In both 1983 and 1986 the questions covered current use and method of contraception, women's sterilisation operations and, for married or cohabiting women, partner's sterilisation operations. Women were also asked about infertility and any difficulties they and their partners might experience in having children. In 1986, for the first time, all women aged 16-59 were asked if they had ever used the contraceptive pill. The questions are shown in full on pages 59-63 of the Individual Interview Schedule in Appendix B of this report.

CURRENT USE OF CONTRACEPTION IN 1986

Almost three quarters of all women aged 16-49 were using some method of contraception (including sterilisation of the woman or her partner for contraceptive reasons). The proportion rose from just over one quarter of 16-17 year olds and one half of 18-19 year olds to four fifths of those aged 35-44. Overall, the contraceptive pill was the most commonly used method. Twenty three per cent of women aged 16-49 used the pill while 13% used the condom and 7% used the I.U.D. (intra-uterine device). Twenty three per cent had been sterilised or had partners who had been sterilised for contraceptive reasons. The highest proportion of women using a non-surgical method of contraception occurred in the 20-24 year old age-group; 71% of women aged 20-24 used at least one non-surgical method of contraception. A more detailed analysis of sterilisation is given below.

Forms of contraception varied greatly between women of different ages. The pill was the most commonly used method among younger women but its use declined steeply with age. Fifty five per cent of 20-24 year olds but only 1% of 45-49 year olds used the pill. Among older women, sterilisation was more common than non-surgical methods; over two fifths of women aged 35-39 and almost a half of those aged 40-44 had been sterilised or had partners who had been sterilised. Sterilisation as a method of contraception was rare among women under 30; only 1% of those aged 20-24 had been sterilised. Proportions using the condom also rose with age, from 6% of teenage women to about 15% of women aged 30 or over. Use of the I.U.D. was highest among 30-39 year olds, 11% of women in this age-group used the I.U.D. compared with only 1% of under 20's and 4% of 20-24 year olds.

Table 5.1

Tables 5.2 - 5.4 show variations in contraceptive use among women in different marital status groups. In each age-group women who were married or cohabiting - and therefore likely to be sexually active - were more likely than other women to be using a method of contraception. Overall, 81% of married or cohabiting women aged 16-49 were using some form of contraception. Among women who were widowed, divorced or separated the proportion was 54% and among single women 48%. Single women aged 18-29 were more likely to be using a form of contraception than single women in other age-groups and over two thirds of single women aged 20-24 were doing so. Among married or cohabiting women aged 16-49 the most common method of contraception was sterilisation.

REASONS FOR NOT USING ANY FORM OF CONTRACEPTION

Twenty nine per cent of women aged 16-49 were not using any form of contraception at the time of the survey. Twelve per cent of women in this age-group said that they had no need of contraception because they were not sexually active. This was in addition to the 3% who said that they were going without sex as a method of contraception. Six per cent of women aged 16-49 were not using a method of contraception because they were pregnant or wanted to get pregnant. Other reasons included the sterility of the woman or her partner as a result of operations not carried out for contraceptive purposes, the woman's belief that she was infertile - sometimes because of the menopause - and simple distaste.

Sixty nine per cent of 16-17 year old women and 42% of 18-19 year olds said that they were not having a sexual relationship or that they were going without sex to avoid pregnancy. Only 17% of women aged 20-24 and 10% or less of older women gave these answers. Older women were more likely than younger women to say that they or their partners were sterile as a result of operations not carried out for contraceptive purposes; this answer was given by 6% of women aged 40-44 and 11% of women aged 45-49.

Tables 5.1-5.4

STERILISATION

As shown above, the proportion of women who had been sterilised or had partners who had been sterilised for contraceptive purposes increased with age. It also increased with the number of children a woman had borne. Only 2% of women with no live births had been sterilised or had partners who had been sterilised. This proportion rose to 13% among women with one live birth and was as high as 50% among women with three or more live births.

Overall, women and their partners were equally likely to have been sterilised but the proportions differed within various sub-groups. At ages 40 and over women were more likely than their partners to have been sterilised. Twenty seven per cent of married or cohabiting women aged 40-44 had been sterilised compared with 24% of their partners. Women aged under 40, were less likely than their partners to have been sterilised. Eighteen per cent of married or cohabiting women aged 30-34 had partners who had been sterilised compared with 11% who had been sterilised themselves. **Tables 5.5-5.6**

Tables 5.7-5.10 show the prevalence of sterilisation among couples in relation to various demographic groupings. These tables are an update of analyses discussed in detail in the 1983 GHS report.

TRENDS IN CONTRACEPTIVE USE

The 1983 GHS report also included a discussion of trends in contraceptive use based on data from the 1983 General Household Survey and the 1976 Family Formation Survey, OPCS (HMSO 1979). Between 1976 and 1983, pill use increased for women in each age-group under 30 and decreased for women in each age-group from 30-44.

Figure 5A updates the trend data by showing the proportions of women in different age-groups who were using the contraceptive pill in 1976, 1983 and 1986. Between 1983 and 1986 there was a decrease from 28% to 26% in the overall proportion of women aged 18-44 who were using the pill. The decrease in use among women aged 30 or over, noted in the 1983 report, continued and the proportion of women aged 25-29 using the pill fell from 45% in 1983 to 35% in 1986. Among women aged 20-24, however, use of the pill continued to increase significantly, from 48% in 1976 to 51% in 1983 and 55% in 1986.

Notes and references

¹ See introduction to Chapter 4.

Between 1976 and 1983 the proportion of women aged 18-44 sterilised for contraceptive reasons or with partners who had been sterilised rose from 13% to 22%. This increase levelled off between 1983 and 1986 and it was only among women aged 40-44 that the proportion increased, from 40% in 1983 to 48% in 1986. **Figure 5B**

PAST AND CURRENT USE OF THE CONTRACEPTIVE PILL

All women aged 16-59 were asked if they had ever used the contraceptive pill and 64% said that they had. Women aged 20-34 were most likely to have used the pill and the proportion was highest, at 87%, among those aged 25-29. Only 32% of 50-54 year olds and 19% of 55-59 year olds had used it.

Fifty nine per cent of 18 and 19 year old women had used the pill at some time but only 42% were using it currently. Among 20-24 year olds, 83% had used it but only 55% were current users. **Table 5.11**

INFERTILITY AND DIFFICULTIES IN HAVING CHILDREN

Women aged 16-44 were asked whether, as far as the woman knew, she and her partner could have (more) children if they wanted to. The question was addressed to all women in this age-group except those sterilised or with partners sterilised and those who were pregnant at the time of interview. Twenty four per cent of all women aged 16-44, apart from those who were pregnant, had already said that they or their partners were sterile, either because of a sterilisation operation or because of some other operation. Five per cent of this group thought that they would have difficulty in having children in the future. **Tables 5.12-5.13**

Table 5.13 Women aged 16-44: opinion about ability to have children in the future, by whether or not woman has had any children liveborn and age

Women aged 16-44*

Great Britain: 1986

Whether or not woman has had children liveborn and she thinks she (and her partner) could have difficulty having (more) children	Age of woman						
	16-17	18-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Has had children liveborn							
Thinks could have more	1	18	49	50	41	34	37
Thinks difficult/impossible to get pregnant for other reasons†	nil nil	0 0	1 ² 1 ²	1 ³ 2 ³	3 ³ 1 ³	2 ⁴ 3 ⁴	1 ³ 1 ³
Sterilised or partner sterilised for contraceptive reasons after other operation	nil nil	1 ¹ 0 ¹	6 ⁷ 1 ⁷	25 ²⁶ 0 ²⁶	41 ⁴² 2 ⁴²	47 ⁵³ 5 ⁵³	21 ²³ 1 ²³
Total	1	19	58	78	87	91	60
No children liveborn							
Thinks could have children	98	80	39	18	8	5	37
Thinks difficult/impossible to get pregnant for other reasons†	nil 0	1 ¹ 0 ¹	2 ² 0 ²	2 ² 0 ²	2 ³ 1 ³	2 ³ 1 ³	1 ² 0 ²
Sterilised or partner sterilised for contraceptive reasons after other operation	nil nil	0 nil	0 0	1 ¹ 0 ¹	1 ² 1 ²	1 ² 1 ²	1 ¹ 0 ¹
Total	99	81	42	22	13	9	40
Total							
Thinks could have children	100	98	89	68	49	39	72
Thinks difficult/impossible to get pregnant for other reasons	nil 0	1 ¹ 0 ¹	3 ⁴ 1 ⁴	3 ⁵ 2 ⁵	5 ⁷ 2 ⁷	4 ⁷ 4 ⁷	3 ⁵ 2 ⁵
Sterilised or partner sterilised for contraceptive reasons after other operation	nil nil	1 ¹ 0 ¹	7 ⁸ 1 ⁸	26 ²⁷ 1 ²⁷	42 ⁴⁴ 2 ⁴⁴	49 ⁵⁴ 6 ⁵⁴	22 ²⁴ 2 ²⁴
Base = 100%	352	1139	875	850	1006	812	5034

* Excludes women who were pregnant at the time of interview.

† Includes difficulties having a baby born alive, difficulties because having children would endanger own health or because menopausal. A small number of women mentioned more than one difficulty.

Table 5.11 Women aged 16-59: percentage of women who have ever used the contraceptive pill by age

Women aged 16-59

Great Britain: 1986

Age of woman	Marital status			Total
	Married or cohabiting	Single	Widowed, divorced or separated	
16-17	[3]	25	nil	26
18-19	[27]	55	[3]	59
20-24	93	74	[20]	83
25-29	90	70	98	87
30-34	88	61	88	86
35-39	81	[21]	81	79
40-44	66	[9]	76	67
45-49	51	[7]	61	51
50-54	34	[5]	27	32
55-59	20	[1]	18	19
Total	68	53	62	64
<i>Base = 100%</i>				
16-17	3	349	nil	352
18-19	33	281	3	317
20-24	393	460	24	877
25-29	716	168	69	953
30-34	733	77	83	893
35-39	884	46	93	1023
40-44	688	26	102	816
45-49	532	29	74	635
50-54	566	37	85	688
55-59	510	36	108	654
Total	5058	1509	641	7208

Table 5.12 Women aged 16-44: opinion about ability to have children in the future by age

Women aged 16-44*

Great Britain: 1986

Whether or not woman thinks she and her partner would have difficulties having (more) children	Age of woman		
	16-29	30-44	Total
	%	%	%
Thinks could have (more) children	95	52	72
Thinks difficult/impossible†			
to get pregnant	2	4	3
to have baby born alive	0	0	0
because would endanger own health	0 2	2 7	1 5
because menopausal	nil	0	0
other	nil	0	0
Sterilised, or partner sterilised			
for contraceptive reasons	3	39	22
after other operation	0 3	3 42	2 24
<i>Base = 100%</i>	2366	2668	5034

* Excludes women who were pregnant at the time of interview.

† A small number of women mentioned more than one difficulty.

Table 5.10 Married or cohabiting women aged 16-49: percentage sterilised or with partners sterilised, for contraceptive reasons, by age and number of children liveborn

a) socio-economic group of partner
b) woman's highest qualification level attained

Married or cohabiting women aged 16-49

Great Britain: 1986

Age of woman and number of children liveborn	a) Socio-economic group* of partner†			b) Woman's highest qualification level*		
	Non-manual	Manual	Total**	GCE 'O' level or above	Other/No qualifications	Total**
Percentage sterilised or with partner sterilised						
16-29						
None	2	0	1	1	2	1
1	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
2	9	14	12	11	12	12
3 or more	[7]	26	27	[8]	30	27
Total	4	7	6	3	9	6
30-49						
None	12	12	12	8	16	12
1	25	25	25	22	26	25
2	41	46	43	40	46	43
3 or more	53	54	55	52	55	55
Total	37	43	41	36	44	41
Total						
None	6	4	5	3	9	5
1	17	14	15	11	18	15
2	37	39	38	35	40	38
3 or more	55	50	51	48	53	51
Total	29	32	31	24	36	31
Base = 100%						
16-29						
None	264	228	508	385	123	508
1	102	163	280	152	128	280
2	92	147	246	106	140	246
3 or more	22	82	109	38	71	109
Total	481	620	1145	681	462	1145
30-49						
None	176	106	287	161	126	287
1	216	212	434	162	272	434
2	614	577	1228	500	726	1228
3 or more	333	520	885	284	597	885
Total	1340	1417	2837	1107	1721	2837
Total						
None	440	334	795	546	249	795
1	318	375	714	314	400	714
2	706	724	1474	606	866	1474
3 or more	355	602	994	322	668	994
Total	1821	2037	3982	1788	2183	3982

* See Appendix A.

** Total includes those with partners who were in the Armed Forces, full-time students or whose jobs were inadequately described.

† 'Partner' refers to the woman's husband or cohabitee in the household.

** Total includes those whose qualification level was not known.

Table 5.8 Women aged 16-49: percentages of women and partners sterilised for contraceptive reasons by age of woman and her highest qualification attained, for married and cohabiting women and for all women

<i>Women aged 16-49</i>		<i>Great Britain: 1986</i>		
Age of woman	Woman's highest qualification level*			Total†
	GCE 'O' level or above	Other/No qualifications		
Percentages sterilised and with partners sterilised				
Married or cohabiting women				
16-29				
woman sterilised	1	5		2
partner** sterilised	3	4		3
30-49				
woman sterilised	16	22		19
partner** sterilised	20	22		21
Total				
woman sterilised	10	18		15
partner** sterilised	13	18		16
<i>Base = 100%</i>				
16-29	681	462		1145
30-49	1107	1721		2837
Total	1788	2183		3982
All women				
16-29				
woman sterilised	0	3		1
partner** sterilised	1	2		1
30-49				
woman sterilised	16	22		19
partner** sterilised	18	19		19
Total				
woman sterilised	7	16		12
partner** sterilised	9	14		11
<i>Base = 100%</i>				
16-29	1568	930		2499
30-49	1326	2035		3367
Total	2894	2965		5866

* See Appendix A.

† Total includes those whose qualification level is not known.

** Partner refers to the woman's husband or cohabitee in the household.

Table 5.9 Married or cohabiting women aged 16-49: percentages of women and partners sterilised for contraceptive reasons by age of woman and socio-economic group of partner

<i>Married or cohabiting women aged 16-49</i>		<i>Great Britain: 1986</i>		
Age of woman	Socio-economic group* of partner†			Total**
	Non-manual	Manual		
Percentages sterilised				
16-29				
woman sterilised	2	3		2
partner† sterilised	2	4		3
30-49				
woman sterilised	16	22		19
partner† sterilised	21	21		21
Total				
woman sterilised	12	16		15
partner† sterilised	16	16		16
<i>Base = 100%</i>				
16-29	481	620		1145
30-49	1340	1417		2837
Total	1821	2037		3982

* See Appendix A.

† Partner refers to the woman's husband or cohabitee in the household.

** Includes those with partners who were in the Armed Forces, full-time students and whose jobs were inadequately described.

Table 5.6 Women aged 16-49: percentages of women and partners sterilised for contraceptive reasons by number of children liveborn

Women aged 16-49		Great Britain: 1986				
	No children liveborn	Number of children liveborn				Total
		1	2	3 or more	Total	
Percentage sterilised						
Married or cohabiting women						
Woman sterilised	2	6	15	29	18	15
Partner* sterilised	3	9	23	51	19	31
Base = 100%	795	714	1474	994	3182	3982
All women						
Woman sterilised	1	5	16	31	18	12
Partner* sterilised	1	7	20	50	17	23
Base = 100%	2185	873	1647	1154	3674	5866

* Partner refers to the woman's husband or cohabitee in the household.

Table 5.7 Women aged 16-49: percentage sterilised or with partner sterilised for contraceptive reasons, by age of woman and number of children liveborn, for married or cohabiting women and all women

Women aged 16-49		Great Britain: 1986				
Age of woman	No children liveborn	Number of children liveborn				Total
		1	2	3 or more	Total	
Percentage sterilised or with partner* sterilised						
Married or cohabiting women						
16-17	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
18-24	0	nil	6	[3]	4	2
25-29	2	nil	13	28	11	8
30-34	8	16	31	54	33	29
35-39	19	28	50	57	47	46
40-44	[7]	39	52	57	53	50
45-49	[3]	22	36	49	40	37
Total	5	15	38	51	37	31
Base = 100%						
16-17	1	2	nil	nil	2	3
18-24	254	106	51	14	171	426
25-29	253	172	195	95	462	716
30-34	121	140	315	157	612	733
35-39	76	152	398	255	805	884
40-44	44	72	314	258	644	688
45-49	46	70	201	215	486	532
Total	795	714	1474	994	3182	3982
Percentage sterilised or with partner* sterilised						
All women						
16-17	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
18-24	0	nil	4	[4]	3	21
25-29	1	nil	12	25	10	7
30-34	5	13	30	51	31	25
35-39	11	25	49	55	46	42
40-44	13	34	51	58	52	48
45-49	4	19	34	48	39	35
Total	2	13	36	50	35	23
Base = 100%						
16-17	347	4	nil	nil	4	352
18-24	952	154	68	18	240	1194
25-29	400	213	225	114	552	953
30-34	201	165	352	175	692	893
35-39	128	173	431	288	892	1023
40-44	77	86	352	301	739	816
45-49	80	78	219	258	555	635
Total	2185	873	1647	1154	3674	5866

* Partner refers to the woman's husband or cohabitee in the household.

Table 5.4 Married or cohabiting women aged 16-49: current use of contraception by age

<i>Women aged 16-49</i>		<i>Great Britain: 1986</i>							
Current use of contraception	Age								
	16-17	18-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Using method(s):									
Non-surgical*:									
Pill	[3]	[13]	57	38	21	8	4	1	19
IUD	nil	[1]	6	10	10	10	7	5	8
Condom	nil	[2]	11	15	17	17	17	18	16
Cap	nil	nil	2	2	4	2	2	3	3
Withdrawal	nil	[1]	4	5	4	5	7	9	6
Safe period	nil	nil	2	2	2	1	2	1	2
Spermicides	nil	nil	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
Contraceptive sponge	nil	nil	0	0	0	nil	0	nil	0
Other	nil	nil	0	0	0	nil	nil	nil	0
At least one	[3]	[16]	77	69	55	41	36	36	51
Surgical:									
Sterilisation - female	nil	nil	2	3	11	20	27	21	15
- male	nil	nil	0	5	18	26	24	16	16
Total - at least one	[3]	[16]	79	77	84	86	86	73	81
Not using a method									
Sterile after other operation	nil	nil	nil	1	1	2	6	11	3
Pregnant now	nil	[11]	11	11	6	2	1	nil	5
Going without sex to avoid pregnancy	nil	nil	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
No sexual relationship	nil	[2]	1	1	0	1	0	1	1
Wants to get pregnant	nil	[2]	5	7	5	3	1	1	3
Unlikely to conceive because of menopause	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	1	9	1
Possibly infertile	nil	nil	1	1	2	4	3	3	2
Doesn't like contraception	nil	[1]	1	1	2	1	2	2	2
Just doesn't use contraception	nil	nil	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
Breast feeding	nil	nil	0	0	0	nil	nil	nil	0
Others	nil	nil	0	1	1	nil	nil	0	0
Total	[3]	[16]	21	23	17	15	15	28	19
<i>Base = 100%+**</i>	3	33	393	716	733	884	688	532	3982

* Abstinence is not included here as a method of contraception. Those who said that 'going without sex to avoid getting pregnant' was their only method of contraception are shown with others not using a method.

+ Percentages add to more than 100 because of rounding and because some women used more than one non-surgical method.

** The base numbers shown include no answers but the percentages were calculated on the base excluding no answers.

Table 5.5 Women aged 16-49: percentages of women and partners* sterilised for contraceptive reasons, for married or cohabiting women and for all women

<i>Women aged 16-49</i>		<i>Great Britain: 1986</i>							
		Age of woman							
		16-17	18-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	Total
Percentage sterilised and with partners* sterilised									
Married or cohabiting women									
Woman sterilised	nil	1	3	11	20	27	21	15	15
Partner* sterilised	nil	0	5	18	26	24	16	16	16
<i>Base = 100%</i>	3	426	716	733	884	688	532	3982	
All women									
Woman sterilised	nil	1	3	10	20	28	21	12	12
Partner* sterilised	nil	0	4	15	22	20	13	11	11
<i>Base = 100%</i>	352	1194	953	893	1023	816	635	5866	

* Partner refers to the woman's husband or cohabitee in the household.

Table 5.2 Women aged 16-49: current use of contraception by marital status

Women aged 16-49		Great Britain: 1986			
Current use of contraception	Single	Married or cohabiting	Widowed, divorced or separated	Total	
	%	%	%	%	
Using methods:					
Non-surgical*:					
Pill	36	19	17	23	
IUD	2	8	9	7	
Condom	7	16	2	13	
Cap	1	3	1	2	
Withdrawal	2	6	0	4	
Safe period	1	2	1	1	
Spermicides	0	1	0	1	
Contraceptive sponge	nil	0	nil	0	
Other	0	0	0	0	
At least one	48	51	31	49	
Surgical:					
Sterilisation - female	0	15	24	12	
- male	nil	16	nil	13	
Total - at least one	48	81	54	71	
Not using a method					
Sterile after other operation	0	3	4	3	
Pregnant now	2	5	2	4	
Going without sex to avoid pregnancy	10	1	2	3	
No sexual relationship	37	1	32	12	
Wants to get pregnant	0	3	1	2	
Unlikely to conceive because of menopause	0	1	1	1	
Possibly infertile	0	2	1	2	
Doesn't like contraception	1	2	1	2	
Just doesn't use contraception	0	1	nil	0	
Breast feeding	nil	0	nil	0	
Others	1	0	1	0	
Total	52	19	46	29	
Base = 100%†	1436	3982	448	5866	

* Abstinence is not included here as a method of contraception. Those who said that 'going without sex to avoid getting pregnant' was their only method of contraception are shown with others not using a method.

† Percentages add to more than 100 because of rounding and because some women used more than one non-surgical method.

Table 5.3 Women aged 16-49: percentage using at least one method of contraception (incl sterilisation) by age and marital status

Women aged 16-49		Great Britain: 1986		
Age of woman	Single	Married or cohabiting	Widowed, divorced or separated	Total
Percentage using contraception				
16-17	27	[3]	nil	27
18-19	50	[16]	[1]	50
20-24	67	79	[14]	72
25-29	55	77	60	72
30-34	44	84	64	79
35-39	[11]	86	49	80
40-44	[4]	86	60	81
45-49	[3]	73	36	66
Total	48	81	54	71
Bases = 100%				
16-17	349	3	nil	352
18-19	281	33	3	317
20-24	460	393	24	877
25-29	168	716	69	953
30-34	77	733	83	893
35-39	46	884	93	1023
40-44	26	688	102	816
45-49	29	532	74	635
Total	1436	3982	448	5866

Table 5.1 Women aged 16-49: current use of contraception by age

Women aged 16-49

Great Britain: 1986

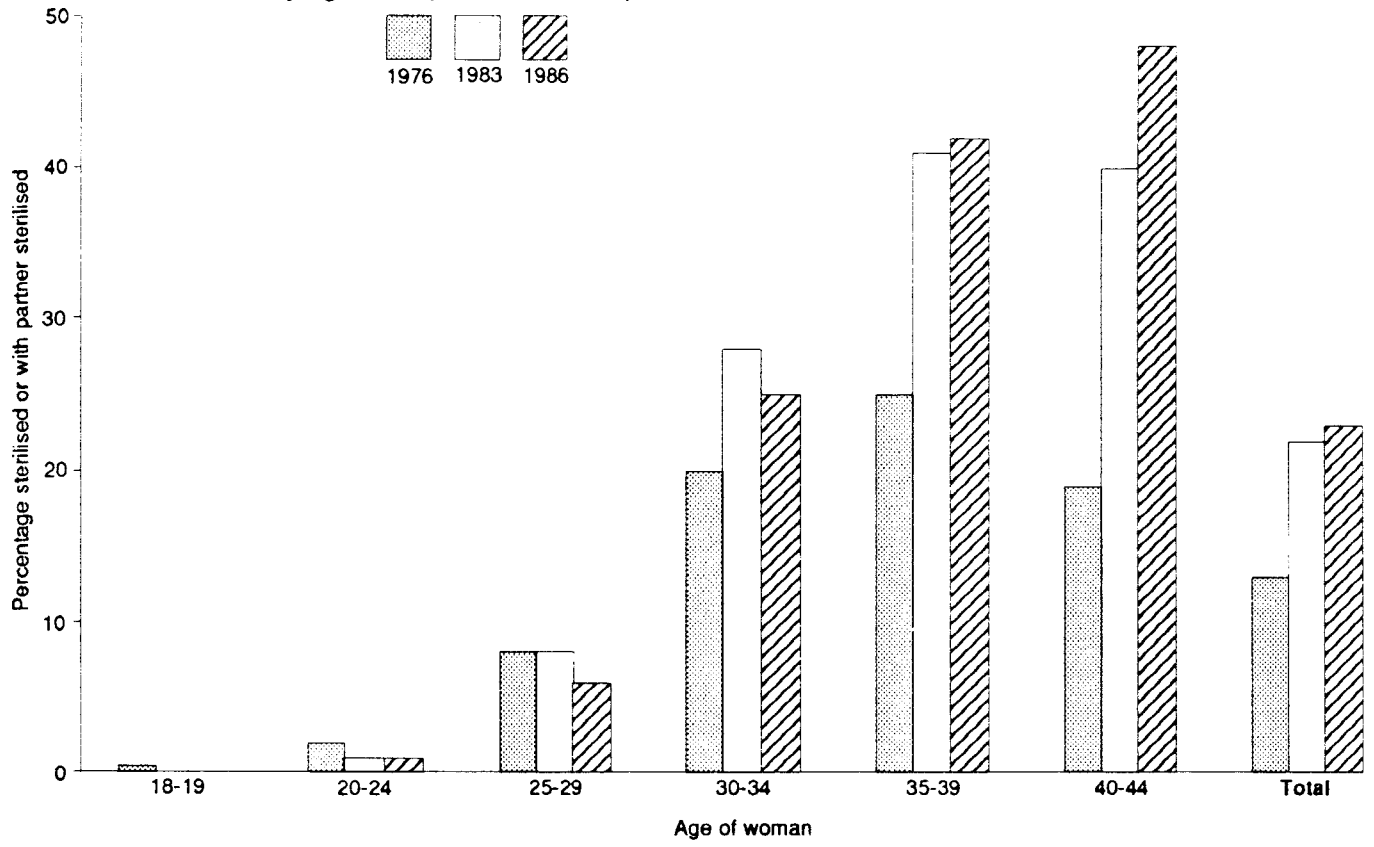
Current use of contraception	Age								Total
	16-17	18-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	
Using method(s)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Non-surgical*:									
Pill	20	42	55	38	21	8	4	1	23
IUD	1	1	4	9	11	10	7	5	7
Condom	6	6	9	13	15	15	14	16	13
Cap	nil	nil	2	3	4	2	2	2	2
Withdrawal	1	2	3	4	4	4	6	8	4
Safe period	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	1
Spermicides	nil	nil	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Other	nil	0	0	0	0	nil	nil	nil	0
At least one	27	50	71	65	54	39	32	31	49
Surgical:									
Sterilisation - female	nil	nil	1	3	10	20	28	21	12
- male	nil	nil	0	4	15	22	20	13	11
Total - at least one	27	50	72	72	79	80	81	66	71
Not using a method									
Sterile after other operation	nil	nil	0	1	1	2	6	11	3
Pregnant now	2	6	6	9	5	2	0	nil	4
Going without sex to avoid pregnancy	15	10	4	2	1	1	1	1	3
No sexual relationship	54	32	13	7	6	7	6	9	12
Wants to get pregnant	nil	1	3	5	4	3	1	1	2
Unlikely to conceive because of menopause	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	1	9	1
Possibly infertile	nil	nil	0	1	1	4	2	2	2
Doesn't like contraception	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2
Just doesn't use contraception	0	nil	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Breast feeding	nil	nil	0	0	0	nil	nil	nil	0
Others	nil	nil	0	2	1	0	nil	0	0
Total	73	50	28	29	22	21	20	35	29
Base = 100%+	352	317	877	953	893	1023	816	635	5866

* Abstinence is not included here as a method of contraception. Those who said that 'going without sex to avoid getting pregnant' was their only method of contraception are shown with others not using a method.

+ Percentages add to more than 100 because of rounding and because some women used more than one non-surgical method.

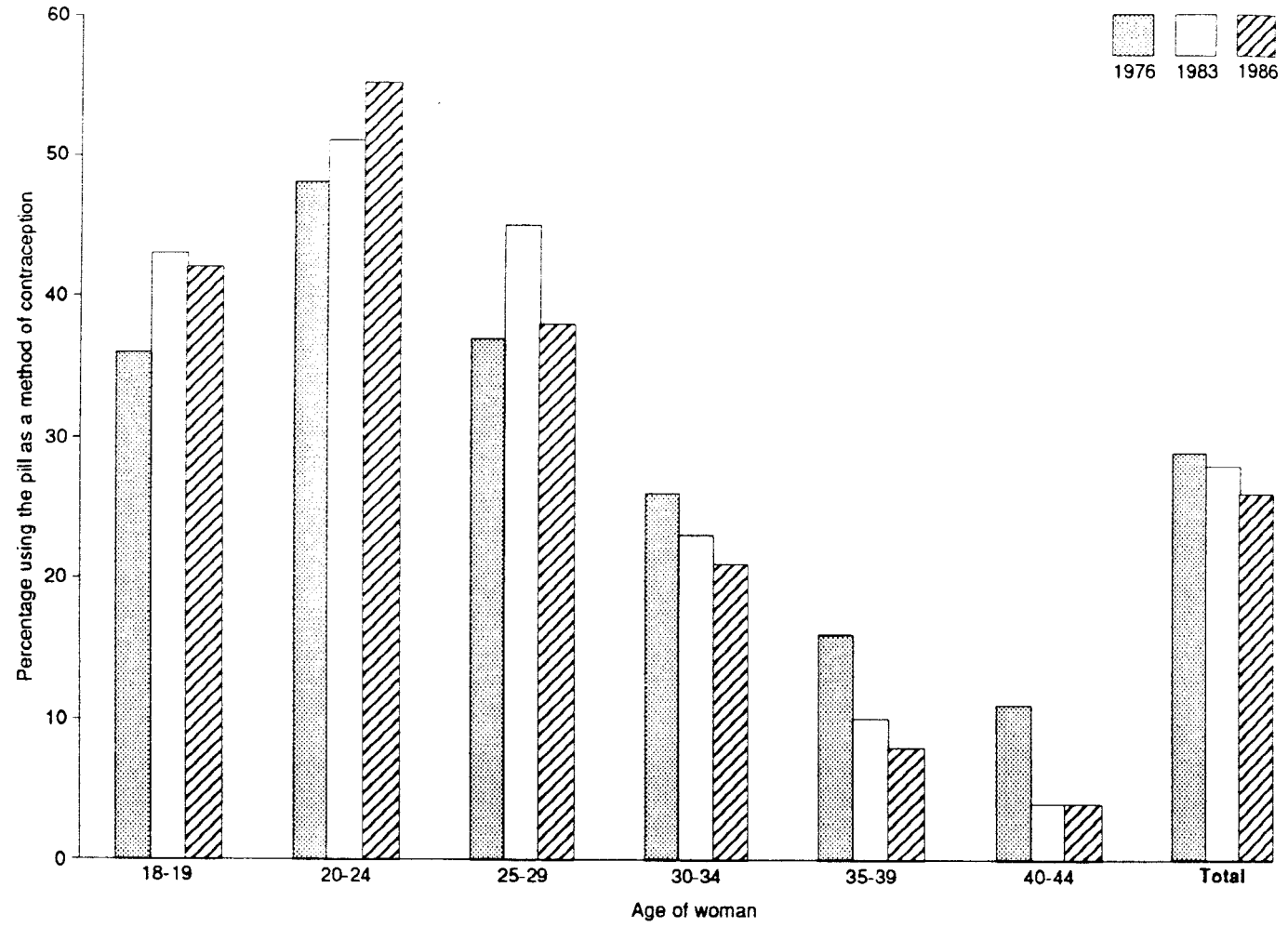
0 1.8 14.7 27.4 32.7 29.2 18.3
 0 3.7 18.4 37.1 43.5 38.6 15.8
 21.8

Figure 5B Women aged 18-44: percentage sterilised or with partner sterilised, for contraceptive reasons, by age: 1976, 1983 and 1986, Great Britain



Sources: Family Formation Survey 1976, OPCS.
General Household Survey 1983 and 1986.

Figure 5A Women aged 18-44: percentage using the pill as a method of contraception by age: 1976, 1983 and 1986, Great Britain



Sources: Family Formation Survey 1976, OPCS.
General Household Survey 1983 and 1986.