Contraception & Abortion: Islamic Perspective
Starting Point........
Allah says,

"O you who believe! Let your slaves and the children among you who have not come to the age of puberty ask your permission (before they come to your presence). On three occasions: before morning prayer (salatul Fajr), and when you put off your clothes for the noon rest, and after the late-night prayer (salatul Isha). These three times are of privacy for you, outside these times, there is no sin on you or on them to move about, attending to each other. Thus, Allah makes clear the Signs to you. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise." [Qur'an 24:58]

"And when the children among you come of age (puberty), then let them also ask for permission, as those before them (in age). Thus, Allah makes clear His Signs to you. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise." [Qur'an 24:59]
"And those who guard their chastity (i.e. private parts, from illegal sexual acts). Except from their wives or (the captives and slaves) that their right hands possess, - for them, they are free from blame. But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors." [Qur'an 23:5-7]

- "And let those who find not the financial means for marriage keep themselves chaste, until Allah enriches them of His bounty..................“[Qur'an 24:33]
Pre-marital sex is absolutely forbidden, it is considered as fornication in Islam

Allah says,

- “Nor come near to adultery, it is an indecent deed, and an evil way” [Qur'an 17:32]
- “The woman and the man guilty of fornication, flog them with hundred stripes. Let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by Allah, if ye believe in Allah and the last day. And let a party of the believers witness their punishment” [Qur'an 24:2]
- Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: "O group of youths, whosoever amongst you has the means of getting married, should do so because it lowers the gaze and protects the private parts; and whosoever does not have the ability, should fast, for indeed, it is a protection for him." (Sahih Al-Bukhari)
The institution of marriage and the want to have children was the custom of the best of creation, the prophets and messengers chosen by Allah. Allah says about them

- "And indeed We sent messengers before you and made for them wives and offspring" [Qur'an 13:38]

- "Those were the prophets who received Allah’s guidance. Follow the guidance they received.........................” [Qur'an 6:90]
- Islam has forbidden celibacy and castration for such purposes.

- The prophet (SAW) made this clear when he told those companions who were considering acetic forms of life: "I pray and I sleep; I fast and I break my fast; and I marry women. Whoever turns away from my way of life is not from me."

- The prophet (SAW) also said: "marry the loving, child-bearing women for I shall have the largest numbers among the prophets on the day of Resurrection."
In Islam, procreation is not only an integral part of matrimony, but is considered as an act of worship to fulfil Allah’s order of multiplying.

Allah mentions some of the bounties that He has bestowed upon mankind in the following verses:

“O mankind, be conscious of your Sustainer, who has created you out of one living entity, and out of it created its mate, and of the two spread abroad a multitude of men and women” Q4:4

“And Allah has given you mates of your own kind, and has given through your mates’ children and grandchildren” Q16:72

"Wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world." [Qur'an 18:46]
Why Contraception

– Contraception or Birth control is a deliberate prevention of pregnancy using any of several methods.

– **reversible and permanent/irreversible prevention**

– Birth control methods vary in effectiveness, and no method is 100% effective in preventing pregnancy EXCEPT for total abstinence.

– Contraception is allowed in Islam
  
  ❖ If is temporary

  ❖ To allowed couple plan/ space their children’s birth

  ❖ On the basis of health.
Contraception is not permissible on the basis of mere stopping or preventing pregnancy period or due to economic/financial situation of the country.

Allah says: "Kill not your children because of poverty - We provide sustenance for you and for them" [Qur'an 6:151]

Allah also says: "And kill not your children for fear of poverty. We shall provide for them as well as for you. Surely, the killing of them is a great sin" ([Qur'an 17:31]

Permanent contraception is unacceptable except for medical reason.
Types of Contraception

- **Barrier methods** (condoms (male & female), diaphragms, cervical caps, cervical shield, contraceptive sponge): These are designed to prevent conception through physical barriers to keep the sperm from entering the uterus.

- **Hormonal contraceptives** (pill, hormonal injections, patches, vagina rings): These inhibit ovulation, thickens the mucus of the cervix to make it difficult for sperm to enter the uterus, and keeps the uterine lining from thickening so that a fertilized egg cannot implant in it, thus prevent fertilization.

- **Spermicides**- jellies, creams, foams, suppositories, tablets or films that contain a sperm-killing chemical. Use with or without a condom, diaphragm, or cervical cap.

- **Implantable rods, IUD**- Small plastic device that is inserted into the uterus to prevent pregnancy.
Types of Contraception, (Cont’d)

– **Surgery/surgical sterilization** (vasectomy, tubal ligation, hysterectomy): Islam forbids a couple from choosing to be permanently child-free through the use of surgeries which are irreversible, unless for medical reasons.

– **Natural family planning**
  - Rhythm method (Fertility awareness-based method)
  - Breastfeeding
  - Early withdrawal (Coitus interruptus/’Azl)
  - Abstinence – Unnatural and abnormal act
Early withdrawal

‘Azl was commonly practiced during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, and he did not object to it as it does not interfere with Allah’s creation reported from the following narrations:

Jaabir ibn ‘Abdullah (AS) who said: “We used to engage in coitus interruptus at the time of the Messenger of Allaah (SAW), and he heard of that but did not prevent us” [Sahih Muslim, 160].

Jabir Bin Abdullah reported that a man came to the Prophet (SAW) and asked him, “I have a female slave who is our maid and who irrigates our palm trees. I approach her (with intercourse) but dislike for her to get pregnant (because of her duties)” The Prophet (SAW) replied:

“Perform ‘azl with her if you wish, for indeed, whatever has been decreed for her will reach her.”

Later on, the man came to the prophet (SAW) and said, “Indeed the woman has gotten pregnant.” The Prophet responded: “I am Allah’s servant and messenger. I have indeed told you that whatever has been decreed for her will reach her”
– In another hadith, the Prophet also said “If you pour that fluid that produces children on a rock, Allah would bring forth a child from it. Surely, Allah will create any soul that He wills to create”.

– Though ‘azl (coitus interruptus) is permissible, spouses need to be sensitive to each other’s needs for fulfillment, and practice this method only if both agree.

– The Prophet (SAW) showed dislike for coitus interruptus when he said: “That is the secret burying alive of infants,” because it cuts off the means of producing offspring, like killing a newborn by burying him or her alive. This indicates that it is strongly disliked.

– It is better for the Muslim not to do that, unless there is a need for it, such as if the woman is sick and cannot cope with a pregnancy or it would be too difficult for her or would cause her harm.
Abortion

– Abortion is the termination of pregnancy before birth.

– It is the most widely debated ethical issue of our time.

– According to WHO, every year in the world there are an estimated 40-50 million abortions. This corresponds to approximately 125,000 abortions per day.

– Abortion is viewed in the same context as having relevance only regarding pregnancies occurring in marriage

– It is not as a response to conception because of extra- or premarital relationships.

– It is universally condemned unless to save the mother's life
Type of Abortion

- **Spontaneous Abortion/ Miscarriage:** Some abortion occurs spontaneously because a fetus does not develop normally or because the mother has an injury or disorder that prevents her from carrying the pregnancy to term.

- **Therapeutic Abortion:** This procedure is performed to preserve the health of the mother. It can be induced for medical reasons or an elective decision to end the pregnancy (e.g. preventing the birth of a deformed child or a child conceived because of rape or incest).

- **Elective(Induced) Abortion:** is a procedure intended to terminate a suspected or known intrauterine pregnancy and to produce a non-viable fetus at any gestational age, deemed necessary by the woman carrying it and performed at her request.
Abortion is permissible if done in the first 90-120 days after conception, and is considered a sin if done after or without just cause.

Allah describes the stages of embryonic in Qur’an (23:12-14 and 32:7-9),

“And certainly did We create man from an extract of clay. Then We placed him as a sperm-drop in a firm lodging. Then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, and We made the clot into a lump [of flesh], and We made [from] the lump, bones, and We covered the bones with flesh; then We developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators”. [Qur’an 23:12-14]

“Who perfected everything which He created and began the creation of man from clay. Then He made his posterity out of the extract of a liquid disdained. Then He proportioned him and breathed into him from His [created] soul and made for you hearing and vision and hearts; little are you grateful”. [Qur’an 32: 7-9]
According to the hadith, the soul is “breathed” into a child four months after conception. 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (A.S.) narrated, "The Messenger of Allah (SAW), said to us:

"Verily, each of you is gathered together (the components of his creation) in his mother's womb for forty days, in the form of a drop of fluid (Nutfah). Then it is a clinging object ('Alaqah) for a similar (period). Thereafter, it is a lump looking like it has been chewed (Mudghah) for a similar (period). The angel is then sent to him and breathes into him the spirit. He is also commanded to issue four decrees: to record his sustenance, his life span, his deeds and (whether he will be) unhappy (by entering Hell) or happy (by entering Paradise). I swear by Allah, other than Whom there is no God, certainly one of you will definitely perform the deeds of the people of Paradise except for an arm's length and then what has been recorded will overtake him and he shall perform the deeds of the people of Hell and enter it. And, certainly, one of you will definitely perform the acts of the people of the Hell until there is not between him and Hell except an arm's length and then what has been recorded will overtake him and he shall perform the deeds of the people of Paradise and enter it." [Sahih Bukhari & Muslim]

Based on this, the Islamic jurisprudence, regard the fetus as “incomplete Zimma” with legal rights but owes no duties, such as right to inheritance.
In Conclusion

– Islam forbids pre-marital intimacy of unmarried Muslim youths
– Islam encourages Muslims to have as many children as possible,
– Islam approves use of contraception between husband and wife which are not harmful, are reversible and not causing abortion for child spacing and health issue.
– Some of the contraceptive methods have one or more harm or side effects such as nausea; depression; hypertension; weight gain, while the natural methods cause the least harm.
– Regardless of the method, contraception is prohibited if it is done for a non-Islamic purpose, such as fear of poverty, wanting to live a peaceful and quite life, and so on.
– Islam forbids elective abortion in a healthy mother 120 days after fertilization.
– Abortion is only permissible where continuing the pregnancy would cause harm and likely death to the mother.
References

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