



## Instructions for Oral Contraceptive Pills

1. If you are taking pills for the first time, take the first pill of your package on the SUNDAY following the first day of your period. If your period starts on Sunday, start taking the pill that same day.
  2. Take one pill every day without fail. When you finish your last pill in the package, start the first pill in a new package the next day. This means you will be taking the pills even during the days you are having a period. NEVER SKIP A DAY! If you are having sex, use a back-up method of birth control, such as condoms for the first month.
  3. Always take the pill at approximately the same time each day. Try to think of something you do every day so you can take your pill at the same time (such as brushing your teeth). You may have mild nausea the first month which usually disappears with time. This is less likely to be a problem if you take it in the evening.
  4. IF YOU FORGET TO TAKE YOUR PILLS:
    - a. If you forget one (1) pill, take the pill you forgot as soon as you remember; then take your regular pill for that day at the same time you usually take your pill.
    - b. If you forget two (2) pills in a row, take two pills the day you remember and two pills the next day. Take one pill per day until the pack is finished. Use condoms for at least seven (7) days.
    - c. If you miss three (3) pills or more in a row, stop taking the pills. When you get your period the next time, start a new pack on Sunday. Use back-up birth control for the first month.
  5. If you have vomiting or diarrhea or are taking antibiotics, the pill may be less effective. Use a back-up method such as condoms.
  6. Remember the pill DOES NOT protect you from AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases and we advise that you ALWAYS use condoms.
  7. If you miss a period and have taken every pill on time, begin your next pack as usual, but call the office to discuss.
  8. Breakthrough bleeding is very common in the first three months of taking birth control pills, especially if pills are missed or taken late. The bleeding usually occurs during the second week of taking the hormone tablets and may be light (spotting for a few days) or heavy (like a normal period). The bleeding usually becomes less of a problem by the third cycle.
  9. DANGER SIGNALS
    - a. SEVERE abdominal pain
    - b. SEVERE chest pain
    - c. SEVERE headaches
    - d. Blurred vision, loss of sight, flashing lights or yellowing of the eyeballs
    - e. SEVERE leg pain in the calf or thighIf any of the above occurs, please call the office right away including during the night. A doctor is always available
  10. Please visit [www.youngwomenshealth.org](http://www.youngwomenshealth.org) for more information.
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