



BIRTH CONTROL PILL USE INSTRUCTIONS (28-day Combined Pills)

TAKING THE PILL

BE SURE TO READ THESE DIRECTIONS:

before you start taking your pills; or any time you are not sure what to do.

**FOR 28 DAY PILL PACKS, WITH Sunday START AS PROVIDED BY
DR's J.BAKER, ERICKSON, & NELSON, M.D.'s**

LOOK AT YOUR PILL PACK. There are 21 active pill (with hormones), WEEKS 1-3, and 7 "reminder" pills (no hormones) WEEK 4.

ALSO CHECK: 1) WHERE TO START, 2) DIRECTION IN WHICH TO TAKE PILLS, AND 3) THE WEEK NUMBERS.

MANY WOMEN HAVE SPOTTING OR LIGHT BLEEDING, OR MAY FEEL SICK TO THEIR STOMACH DURING THE FIRST 1-3 MONTHS ON THE PILL. If you do feel sick, do NOT stop taking the pill. Problems will usually go away. If it does not go away, check with your doctor.

MISSING PILLS CAN CAUSE SOME SPOTTING OR LIGHT BLEEDING, even if you make up the missed pills. You could also feel a little sick to your stomach on the days you take two pills to make up for the missed pills.

IF YOU MISS PILLS AT ANY TIME YOU COULD GET PREGNANT, THE WORST TIME TO MISS PILLS ARE:

- When you start a pack late,
- When you miss pills at the beginning of the pack or in the third week of the pack.

ALWAYS BE SURE TO HAVE READY:

- ANOTHER KIND OF BIRTH CONTROL (such as condoms and foam) to use as backup in case you miss pills.
- AN EXTRA, FULL PACK FOR PILLS.

IF YOU HAVE VOMITING OR DIARRHEA, or, IF YOU TAKE SOME MEDICINES, such as antibiotics, your pills may not work as well. Use a backup method, such as condoms and foam, until you can check with your doctor.

IF YOU FORGET TO TAKE MORE THAN ONE PILL TWO MONTHS IN A ROW, talk to your doctor about how to make pill-taking easier or about using another method of birth control.

WHEN TO START THE FIRST PACK OF PILLS

- If your period begins on Sunday, start that same day.

FIRST PACK-SUNDAY START:

1- Take the first pill of the first pack on the Sunday after your period starts, even if you are still bleeding.

WHAT TO DO DURING THE FIRST MONTH

1- TAKE THE PILL AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME EVERY DAY UNTIL THE PACK IS EMPTY.

- do not skip pills even if you have bleeding between monthly periods or feel sick to your stomach (nausea)

- do not skip pills even if you do not have sex very often.

2- WHEN YOU FINISH A PACK:

-start the next pack on the next day. Do not stop between packs. For example: If you finish on Saturday, start your next pack on Sunday.

3- ALWAYS HAVE AN EXTRA, FULL PACK OF PILLS.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU MISS PILLS AND YOU START EVERY PILL PACK ON SUNDAY

If you MISS ONE pill:

Take it as soon as you remember, and take the next pill at the usual time. This means you may take two pills in one day.

If you MISS TWO pills in a row in the FIRST TWO WEEKS.

1- Take two pills on the day you remember and two pills the next day.

2- Then take one pill a day until you finish the pack.

3- Also use another birth control method (such as condoms and foam) as a back-up, if you have sex in the 7 days after you miss the pills.

If you MISS TWO pills in a row in the THIRD WEEK:

1- Keep taking one pill every day until Sunday.

2- On Sunday, **THROW OUT** the rest of the pack and start a new pack of pills that same day.

3- Also use a back up method, such as condoms and foam, if you have sex in the 7 days after you miss the pills.

4- You may not have your period this month. It is normal and safe. However, if you miss your period two months in a row, call your doctor for a pregnancy test.

IF YOU MISS THREE OR MORE pills in a row ANYTIME:

1- Keep taking one pill every day until Sunday.

2- On Sunday, **THROW OUT** the rest of the pack and start a new pack of pills that same day.

3- Also use a backup method, such as condoms and foam, if you have sex in the 7 days after you miss the pills.

4- You may not have your period this month. It is normal and safe. However, if you miss your period two months in a row, call your doctor for a pregnancy test.

IF YOU MISS ANY pills in the FOURTH WEEK:

If you forget any of the 7 reminder pills (without hormones) in Week 4 just **THROW AWAY** the pills you missed and keep taking one pill each day until the pack is empty. You do not need a backup method.

EARLY PILL DANGER SIGNALS:

Abdominal Pain (severe)

Chest Pain (severe)- Shortness of Breath

Headaches (severe)

Eye problems such as blurring or loss of vision

Severe leg pain (calf or thigh)

DON'T IGNORE THESE SIGNS. CONTACT US RIGHT AWAY.

HOW TO TAKE ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES

- ❖ Circle the way you will be taking the pill:
 - Start on the first Sunday of/or after your period starts.
 - Start on the first day of your period.
 - Start on the fifth day of your period.

- ❖ Take one pill every day until you finish the pack.

- ❖ Take your pills at the same time each day.
 - It is very helpful to take your pills with another daily activity (breakfast, brushing your teeth, going to sleep) to establish a routine.

- ❖ Circle the kind of pack you would like to use:
 - 28-day
 - 21-day

- ❖ If you will be using a 28-day pack, start a new pack as soon as you finish the present pack.

- ❖ If you will be using a 21-day pack, count seven days before starting the next package.

- ❖ If you forget to take the pill, follow these directions:
 - *If you miss one pill:* Take the missing pill as soon as you discover the omission and continue to take your pills.
 - *If you miss two pills:* Take an extra pill each night until you have caught up. You must use contraception until you have taken pills at least seven days in a row.
 - *If you miss three or more pills:* Take an extra pill each night until you have caught up. You must use additional contraception until you have taken at least seven days in a row.

- ❖ If you have missed pills and start to have a full normal period, consider this the beginning of a new menstrual cycle and start a new pack of pills either:
 - On the first Sunday of/or after your period begins if you were on a Sunday start.
 - On the first day of bleeding if you were on a first day start.
 - Continue to use an additional form of contraception for 7 days.

REMEMBER:

- ❖ Call the office for a follow-up exam and instructions on how to get started again next cycle.
 - If you have questions about a backup method of birth control, call the office.
 - If you have difficulty filling your prescription, call us.

Birth control pills DO NOT protect you against any sexually transmitted diseases. They provide no protection against AIDS. If you are not in a long-term mutually faithful relationship, you should strongly consider the use of condoms each time you have sexual intercourse.

POTENTIAL DANGER SIGNS AND MINOR PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE USE

* Possible danger signs of severe problems:

- * Abdominal pain (severe)
- * Chest pain (severe)
- * Headaches (severe)
- * Eye problems: blurred vision, flashing lights, blindness
- * Severe leg pain (calf or thigh)

You may experience any of the following common side effects. **DO NOT STOP TAKING YOUR PILLS** until you have spoken with your clinician:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| * Breast tenderness | * Acne |
| * Nausea | * Unwanted hair growth |
| * Depression | * Weight gain |

These symptoms will often get better or disappear the longer you remain on the pill. Talk with your clinician as to what can be done to reduce these unwanted effects.

* Spotting (not requiring the use of a pad or tampon), or lack of withdrawal bleeding are very common effects of using the pill

- * Do not stop using your pills unless your clinician tells you to.
- * Spotting and breakthrough bleeding are not diseases, and do not mean that you have cancer, or any other serious problems.
- * As your body becomes used to your taking the pill (usually within the first 3 months), these effects should be reduced or disappear entirely. Should you continue to experience them, call your clinician.

* Amenorrhea (Lack of period)

- * Continue to take your pills.
- * Call your clinician for advice.
- * If you feel pregnant and/or have a positive pregnancy test, stop taking the pills and call your clinician.
- * Use another form of contraception until the situation is resolved.

* Remember, the pill is a medicine and it's action can be effected by other drugs you take.

* Drugs, particularly antibiotics and medications for epilepsy, may reduce the effectiveness of the pill.

* Tell your clinician about any other drugs or medications you are taking in order to avoid decreasing the effectiveness of the pill.

* If you are taking other drugs, be sure to tell the doctor who prescribed them that you are also taking the pill because it may effect the action of the other drug.

* If you wish to be extra sure of not becoming pregnant, use a spermicide and/or condoms in addition to the pill while you are taking other medications.

* If you need advice on the drugs you are taking, please call.

* If you experience severe diarrhea or vomiting due to unrelated illness, you may not absorb the pill properly. If this occurs, you may wish to use a spermicide and/or condoms for seven days after you recover from your illness.