

Remember, the pill **does not** protect you from Sexually Transmitted Infections or HIV.

Always use condoms to protect yourself!



HOW DO BIRTH CONTROL PILLS WORK?

- Birth control pills contain hormones like the ones your body makes. These hormones stop your ovaries from releasing eggs. Without an egg, you cannot get pregnant.
- No method of birth control is 100% effective. If you take all of your birth control pills on time, they are 99% effective. If you skip some pills, they are 91% effective.

HOW DO I START THE PILL?

- There are 2 ways to start the pill:
 - **Quick Start:** Take your first pill as soon as you get the pack.
 - **Next period:** Take your first pill soon after your next period begins.
- If you take your first pill *up to 5 days after the start of your period*, you are protected against pregnancy **right away**.
- If you take your first pill *more than 5 days after the start of your period*, you should **use condoms as back-up for the first 7 days**.

HOW DO I USE THE PILL?

- **Once you start using the pill**, take 1 pill each day. Take your pill at the same time each day.
- After you finish a pack of pills, you should start a new pack the next day. You should have **NO** day without a pill.

WHAT IF I MISS PILLS?

- **I forgot ONE pill:** Take your pill as soon as you can.
- **I forgot TWO pills or more:** Take your pill as soon as you can. Take your next pill at the usual time. **Use condoms for 7 days. Use emergency contraception (EC) if you have unprotected sex.**

WHAT IF I STOPPED TAKING THE PILL AND HAD UNPROTECTED SEX?

- Take Emergency Contraception (EC) **right away**. EC can prevent pregnancy up to 5 days after sex, and it works better the sooner you take it.

HOW DOES THE PILL HELP ME?

- The pill is safe and effective birth control.
- Your periods may be more regular, lighter, and shorter. You may have clearer skin.
- The pill lowers your risk of getting cancer of the uterus and ovaries.
- The pill has **no effect** on your ability to get pregnant in the future, after you stop taking it.

HOW WILL I FEEL ON THE PILL?

- You will feel about the same. In the first 2-3 months you may have nausea, bleeding between periods, weight change, and/or breast pain. These problems often go away after 2-3 months.

DOES THE PILL HAVE RISKS?

- The pill is very safe. Serious problems are rare. If you have any of the symptoms below, call your health provider.
 - Leg pain, swelling, and redness
 - Weakness or numbness on 1 side of your body
 - Bad headache
 - Vision problems
 - Chest pain
- Your health provider can help you find out if these symptoms are signs of a serious problem.

