

FACTS ABOUT PROGESTIN-ONLY BIRTH CONTROL PILLS

What are progestin-only birth control pills and how do they work?

The progestin-only birth control pill, also known as an oral contraceptive, is a pill taken daily to prevent pregnancy. You take it once a day, at the same time every day. Progestin-only birth control causes the lining of the uterus (womb) to thin and the cervical mucus to thicken, which prevents sperm from meeting with and fertilizing an egg.

Progestin-only pills contain only one hormone, progestin. Progestin-only pills are a good choice if you cannot take estrogen.

How effective are progestin-only birth control pills?

Birth control pills are 91-94% effective (91% effective for typical use) if used exactly as directed by your healthcare provider even on days when you do not have sex.

Who can take progestin-only birth control pills?

- You can take progestin-only pills if you have Lupus.
- You can take progestin-only pills if you smoke and are over 35, (it is recommended that you stop smoking).
- You can take progestin-only pills if you have a history of migraines.
- You can take progestin-only pills if you are breast-feeding your baby.

Is there anyone who should not use progestin-only birth control pills?

You should not use the progestin-only birth control pills if:

- You have or ever had breast cancer
- You are pregnant
- You have liver disease (hepatitis), liver tumors, or your eyes look yellow
- You have a history of stroke, vascular disease, or poorly controlled high blood pressure

What are the possible side effects of progestin-only birth control pills?

The most common side effects of the progestin-only birth control pill include irregular menstrual periods, headache, breast tenderness and nausea.

How do you take progestin-only birth control pills?

Swallow one pill each day. **Progestin-only pills** come only in packages of 28-day "active" pills. It is important to take progestin-only pills every day, and to take them at the **same time** each day.

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Try taking your pill at the same time you always do something else in your daily routine - like brushing your teeth in the morning or going to bed at night.

If you need a reminder, there are apps available for your electronic devices that send a text message or email reminders about when to take your pill.

If you are late taking a progestin-only pill by more than three hours, you will need to use another type of birth control (such as a condom) to prevent pregnancy, but continue to take the progestin-only pill.

You can start taking the progestin-only birth control pills at any time as long as you are not pregnant.

- If you start taking the progestin-only birth control pills the first 5 days of your period, you do not need a back up method of birth control.
- If you start taking the progestin-only birth control pills 5 days or more after your period, you will need to use a back up method (such as condoms) or do not have sex.

You can take progestin-only birth control pills if you are breast-feeding.

Where can I get progestin-only birth control pills?

You need a prescription. Progestin-only birth control pills can be purchased at local pharmacies or you can get them at the health department.

What if I stopped using or missed taking the progestin-only birth control pills 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. You can get EC at the pharmacy without a prescription or at your county health department family planning clinic or doctor's office.

REMEMBER:

- The progestin-only birth control pills do not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Protect yourself; use a latex or vinyl condom every time you have oral, vaginal or anal sex.
- Take the progestin-only birth control pill exactly as directed by your healthcare provider even on days when you do not have sex.
- Certain antibiotics, tuberculosis medications, seizure medications, medications used to treat HIV and herbal supplements such as St. Johns Wort may make birth control pills less effective.