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Hormonal pills



What are the types of oral contraceptives pills (OCPs)?

- **Combined OCP**, containing both estrogen and progestin, referred to as monophasic, biphasic and triphasic.
- **Mini pills**; Progestin-only pills (POPs).

What are monophasic contraceptives pills?

Monophasic contraceptives pills are characterized in that each pill has the exact same level of estrogen and progestin throughout the pill cycle, this leads to the absence of side effect resulted by the fluctuation of hormonal levels.

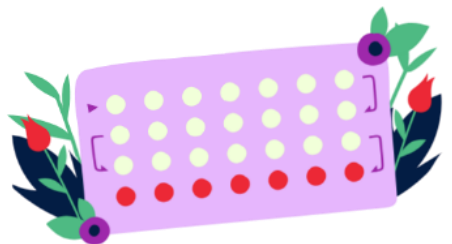


What are biphasic contraceptives pills?

These pills are characterized in that they contain a fixed amount of estrogen, while the amount of progestin increases in the second half of the cycle.

What are triphasic contraceptives pills?

Triphasic pills are characterized in having variable levels of the two hormones. Depending on the brand of contraceptives pills levels of estrogen might vary and not progestin. They contain 7 placebo pills.



How do different OCPs work?

They work by inhibiting ovulation, thickening the cervical mucus creating a barrier that prevents sperm from entering your uterus and eventually reaching the ovum. They also thin the lining of your uterus so that a fertilized ovum cannot attach and grow there.

What are the medical uses of OCPs?

OCPs must be taken daily at the same time, if one or two pills were missed for more than 12 hours, the contraceptive effect will be reduced.



What are the advantages of POPs?

- They can be used if you have medical issues, such as having a high risk of cardiac disease, hemorrhagic strokes, hypertension, or migraines.
- They can be used while breastfeeding.
- They offer a fast recovery of fertility if you want to get pregnant.

What are the disadvantages of POPs?

- They might be less effective than combined OCPs.
- They must be taken the same time every day.



What are the side effects of POPs?

Decreased libido and headache



Irregular menstruation



Breast tenderness, acne, increase in weight and depression



What are the instructions after you miss taking the pill on time?

Less than 12 hours: take the pill you missed as soon as possible.

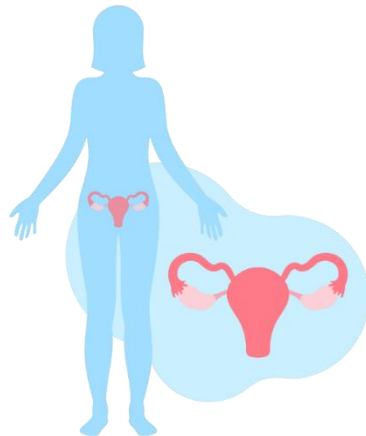
Between 12 to 24 hours: take one pill as soon as possible, avoid intercourse or use an additional method of contraception.

- **More than 24 hours:** take one pill as soon as possible and ask your doctor if it is possible to take second pill in the same day, and if you should use the pills that have been missed in this month, with avoid intercourse or use an additional method of contraception for at least 7 days.



What are the advantages of contraceptive pills?

- Reduce the risk of ovarian and endometrial cancer.
 - Improve acne treatment.
 - Reduce the severity of dysmenorrhea.
 - Positive possible effect on bone mineral density
- Reduce production of androgens caused by polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS).
- Reduce heavy uterine bleeding.



What are the disadvantages of contraceptive pills?

- It does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- Increase risk of getting heart attacks, strokes, and thrombosis.
- Headaches
- Nausea
- Bloating
- 9 women out of 1000 using OCPs get pregnant, the percent decreases with proper use according to instruction.



When do health care providers not recommend the use of OCPs?

- If you were breastfeeding.
- If you are older than 35 years and a smoker. If you have previous or current history of deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism. If you have history of breast cancer or hypertension
- If you have history of stroke, cardiovascular disease, or liver disease.
- If you have complication of diabetes mellitus, such as kidney failure or diabetic retinopathy.



When can you get pregnant after you stop taking OCPs?

In most women, ovulation occurs again after 2 weeks from stopping OCPs. Whenever ovulation occurs, you can get pregnant.

What happens if you stopped taking OCPs and your period did not return?

Known as post-pill amenorrhea. The pill inhibits the body from producing hormones responsible of ovulation and menstruation. It might take some time until your body returns to producing those hormones naturally.



Do OCPS cause weight gain?

A large number of women believe this to be true, however studies showed that the effect of OCPs on weight is insignificant.

Do OCPs have an effect on blood pressure?

OCPs might increase blood pressure slightly.

Do women who are older than 35 keep using OCPs?

If you were in good health and do not smoke, then you can keep using OCPs after reaching 35 years of age.



Do antibiotics decrease the efficacy of OCPs?

Some may exaggerate the effect of antibiotics on OCPs, except in the case where one antibiotic is used, that is rifampin (Rimactane).

What happens when I take OCPs when I am pregnant?

In the case you keep using OCPs while you did not know that you were pregnant, do not worry. It does not cause any fetal deformities.



Sources and references:

[/https://www.canva.com](https://www.canva.com)

review and audit:

This booklet was reviewed by obstetricians and gynecologists consultants
at King Fahad University Hospital

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