



# The Pill

## QUICK FACTS!

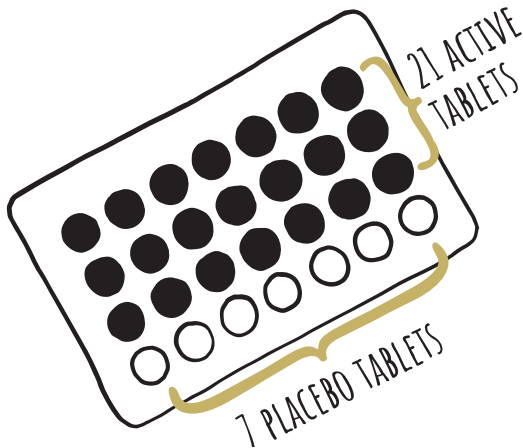
- + The pill contains the medications estrogen and progestin.
- + The pill is a treatment for problem periods. It can help with heavy, irregular, or painful bleeding. It can also help with other period concerns.
- + The medication in the pill keeps the lining of the uterus thin and blocks ovulation. It also helps to prevent and treat acne.
- + The pill is a safe medication for most people to use.
- + There are many different pill brands, and your provider will recommend the one that is best for you.

## How do I get started on the pill?

- + Start it today or as soon as you get it from the pharmacy.
- + You can start the pill on any day of the week. The pack comes with a set of stickers so you can label each pill with the correct day.
- + It's a good idea to set an alarm on your cell phone to help remember to take the pill at the same time each day.

## Why do I have two different pills in my pack?

- + There are two types of pills in most packs:
- + **Active pills** that contain medication. It is very important not to miss any of these pills.



- + **Placebo pills** contain no active medication. You will have your period during the placebo pills. Most people start bleeding on day 2-3 of the placebo pills, but bleeding can start any time when off active pills. Be sure to start a new pack of pills after the last placebo pill, even if you are still on your period.
- + For most people, periods are lighter and less painful when using the pill. This can happen right away, or after several months of use.



Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology  
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Find out more at: [cupag.org/periods](http://cupag.org/periods)

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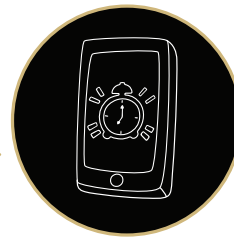
## What are the possible side effects from the pill?

- + Most users of the pill have no side effects.
- + For the first week, a few people will have mild stomach upset, mild headache, or breast tenderness. Let our clinic know if these are issues for you, or they continue longer than 2 weeks.
- + The pill is not thought to cause weight gain or depression. Talk to your provider if you have these concerns before or while you are using the pill.
- + The pill does not make it harder to get pregnant later on and does not increase the risk of cancer. Using the pill lowers the risk of getting uterine and ovarian cancer.
- + Sometimes there is unexpected or breakthrough bleeding on the pill. This usually gets better after using it for several months. **Make sure you are taking the pill at the same time every day.** Please call or message our clinic if breakthrough bleeding continues.

## Did you know?

The pill was developed over 60 years ago and has been used by millions and millions of people. In adolescent gynecology, it is one of the most important options used to treat menstrual and hormonal problems. It is considered one of the most important medicines ever developed because it is a safe way for people to plan when to have children.

SET A TIMER ON YOUR CELL PHONE TO REMIND YOU TO TAKE YOUR MEDICATION AT THE SAME TIME EACH DAY.



- + The pill is a safe medication to use, but there is a very tiny increased risk of blood clots (called a venous thrombosis, VTE, or a deep venous thrombosis, DVT.) There is a small risk of having a blood clot even when not using estrogen-containing medication. **People with additional risk factors for blood clots should avoid the use of the combined pill, patch, and ring, and instead use progestin-only treatments to help with periods or for contraception.**



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## How can I get refills?

- + Contact your pharmacy 2 weeks before you need more medication to request a refill.
- + You should be able to get a 3-month supply of your medication. Contact your insurance company if you can't get a 3-month supply. They may require that you use a certain pharmacy or mail order.
- + If you have health insurance, your pill should not have any cost or co-pay.
- + Some insurance (for example, Colorado Medicaid) will supply you with a 12-month supply of pills after you have been on your pill for at least 3 months.
- + If you are having any problems getting or using the pill, call or MyChart message our office and we will help.

## Did you know?

**82% of teens who are on the pill report a reason other than birth control for using it. The pill helps with heavy and painful periods, lessens acne, or is a treatment for other menstrual and hormonal problems.**

*Reference: "Beyond Birth Control: The Overlooked Benefits of Oral Contraceptive Pills," Rachel K. Jones of the Guttmacher Institute*

## What do I need to know when using the pill as birth control?

- + It takes 7 days for the pill to be an effective method of birth control.
- + It is important to take the pill the same time each day and not miss any doses.
- + The pill does not prevent STI's. Use condoms and get tested at least each year.



**Interested in learning more?  
Check out our guide to problem periods!**



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