

# All about the Birth Control Pill

**The Birth Control Pill is a small pill a woman takes every day to keep from getting pregnant.**

The pill has two kinds of hormones like the ones made in a woman's body. These hormones keep the woman's eggs from leaving her ovaries. There are many kinds of birth control pills with different amounts of these hormones in them.

## **How does the Pill work?**

Every day at about the same time, the woman takes one pill. That way the hormones stay at the level needed to keep her from getting pregnant.

## **How well does it work?**

The pill is very good at keeping women from getting pregnant.

Only about 1 to 8 women out of 100 who use the pill for a year get pregnant.

## **How do I get the Pill?**

You must go to a health care provider. You should tell your Family PACT provider about:

- ◆ Any health problems you may have.
- ◆ Any medicine you may be taking.

Your provider can help you decide if the pill is right for you. There are many kinds of pills. If one is not right for you, another one might be.

## **What do women like about using it?**

- ◆ It does not interrupt having sex.
- ◆ It can help a woman have periods when she expects them.
- ◆ It can help relieve headaches and other problems.
- ◆ It can also lessen the cramps and heavy bleeding some women have with their periods.

## **What do some women dislike?**

- ◆ You must remember to take the pill every day.
- ◆ A few women may have problems with side effects.

## **How do I use the Pill?**

Start taking your pills the day your Family PACT provider suggests.

- ◆ Take one pill every day until the whole pack is gone.
- ◆ Take your pills at about the same time every day.

Find a way to remember to take your pill every day. For example, you could take your pill right after you brush your teeth every morning.

During the first 2 weeks you start taking the pill, use another method, like condoms, every time you have sex. This will help protect you while you get used to taking the pill.

## **What if I miss a Pill?**

If you miss taking any of your pills, there's a chance you could get pregnant.

- ◆ Use another method, like condoms, to help protect you.
- ◆ Ask about using Emergency Contraceptive (EC) pills.

## **If you miss taking 1 pill:**

- ◆ Take it as soon as you remember it.
- ◆ Take the next pill at the regular time.

## **If you miss taking 2 or more pills:**

- ◆ Take 2 pills right away. Take 2 pills the next day.
- ◆ Call your Family PACT provider for advice.
- ◆ Ask about EC pills.
- ◆ Use condoms and keep using them until you start your new pack.

## **What about the side effects of the Pill?**

Some side effects of the pill are:

- ◆ Changes in your period, or spotting and bleeding between periods
- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Breast tenderness
- ◆ Mood or weight changes
- ◆ Changes in sex drive

If any of these side effects bother you, talk to your Family PACT provider.

## **The Pill may not be safe for some women.**

Talk with your Family PACT provider about any health problems you may have. For example:

- ◆ If you are over 35 years old and smoke.
- ◆ If you have had blood clots, heart disease, or a stroke.
- ◆ If you have high blood pressure or diabetes.
- ◆ If you have breast cancer or liver disease.

## **Watch for these warning signs.**

**Call your Family PACT provider right away if you have:**

- ◆ Sudden headaches
- ◆ Eye problems (blurry vision)
- ◆ Sharp, sudden pain in the leg, chest, or abdomen

**The Birth Control Pill  
does not protect you from HIV  
(the virus that causes AIDS)  
and other diseases people get from  
having sex.**

Use condoms (for men or women)  
along with the Pill  
to protect yourself from these diseases.