

How it works

Oral contraceptives, or birth control pills, are taken to prevent pregnancy. When taken correctly, oral contraceptives have a less than 1% failure rate when used without missing any pills. However, forgetting to take your pills will increase your chances of becoming pregnant. For most women oral contraceptives are free of serious or unpleasant side effects. While taking this medication it is very important to be able to take a pill every day at the same time of day. If you feel this may be a problem please talk to the nurse or doctor at your clinic about using another form of birth control.

Before you start

Before you start taking the pill be sure you understand the directions! If you have any questions be sure to ask. The right way to take the pills is to take one every day at the same time of day. If you miss pills you can get pregnant. Some women have spotting (light bleeding) or feel sick to the stomach at first. This will go away so do not stop taking the pills. Missing pills can also cause spotting.

Side effects

Return to the clinic if you experience any serious side-effects, such as:

- Severe pains in the chest, abdomen or calf.
- Sudden severe headache, complete or partial loss of vision.
- Change in mood, especially depression or anger.

Getting started

Sprintec packs contain 21 blue **active** pills. These pills contain hormones to prevent pregnancy. There are also 7 white inactive pills. These pills contain no hormones and are called reminder pills. You take these during the week you will get your period. You have a choice about when to start your pills. Your health-care provider will start you on either the first day of your period or on the first Sunday after your period starts.

Sunday Start: take the first “active” blue pill on the **first Sunday after your period starts** even if you are still bleeding. If your period starts on Sunday start your pills that day. Use condoms for the first 7 days you take pills.

Day One Start: Take an “active” blue pill labeled that day (for example if the first day you bleed is Tuesday, take the first Tuesday pill) during the first 24 hours of your period. Take one pill a day until you finish that pack.

Remember: during the month take one pill at the same time every day until the pack is empty. Do not skip pills even if you have spotting, feel sick to your stomach, or do not have sex very often. When you finish your green pills, start a new pack the next day. Do not wait!

Things to know

If you have vomiting or diarrhea for any reason, or if you take other medications such as antibiotics, the pill may not work as well as it should. In these situations you will need to use condoms. You will also need to check with the clinic in these situations.

If you have trouble remembering to take the pills at the same time every day be sure to talk to the nurse or doctor at the clinic right away. They can help you find a better time of day to make taking the pill easier, or can suggest other methods of birth control that may be easier for you to use.

Remember, oral contraceptive pills **do not protect you from sexually transmitted infections (STI's)**. You must still use condoms to protect yourself from HIV/AIDS, chlamydia, gonorrhea, genital warts, herpes, and syphilis. You can get condoms and STI testing at the clinic.

What if I miss a pill?

If you miss 1 active blue pill take it as soon as you remember. Take the next pill at the regular time. This means you may take 2 pills on the same day. You will not need condoms as back-up.

If you miss 2 active blue pills in a row in week 1 or 2: take the 2 pills on the day you remember and 2 pills the next day. Then take 1 pill a day until you finish the pack. You may become pregnant in the 7 days after you missed pills so you must use condoms as back-up for those 7 days.

If you miss 2 blue pills in a row week 3:
Sunday start: keep taking 1 pill every day until Sunday. On Sunday throw out the rest of the pack and start a new pack of pills that same day.

Day 1 start: throw out the rest of the pill pack and start a new pack on the same day. You may not have your period this month, but this is to be expected. If you miss your period for 2 months go to the clinic, you could be pregnant.

If you miss three pills in a row call or return to the clinic as soon as possible.

If you are still not sure what to do when you have missed pills, continue to take 1 active blue pill a day and use condoms until you can reach the clinic!

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Good nutritional intake is important. Make sure your diet contains enough calcium and iron. Regular exercise like walking, biking or running is important, too.

Minneapolis School Based Clinics

Edison: Room 107 612-668-1321

Henry: Room 212 612-668-1944

Longfellow: Rm 126 612-668-4720

Roosevelt: Room 143 612-668-4834

South: Room 122 612-668-4333

Southwest: Rm E021 612-668-3040

Washburn: Room 006 612-668-3453

Minneapolis Dept of Health & Family Support

250 South 4th Street, Room 510

Minneapolis, MN 55415

612-673-2301

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support at 612-673-2301 or email

health.familysupport@minneapolis.mn.gov.

Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may use a relay service to call 311 agents at 612-673-3000. TTY users may call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

Attention: If you have any questions regarding this material please call Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support 612-673-2301.

Hmong - Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2800; Spanish - Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llama 612-673-2700; Somali - Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500



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