

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Start while you are having your menses (the first 5 days of your menstrual cycle)

- 1 Study the package insert. It sounds like a boring idea but...the package inserts of OCs are well done. They tell you a great deal about the pill you chose.
- 2 Make use of the stickers and other support tools to help you remember to take the pill regularly.
- 3 Call your doctor immediately if certain problems occur. Like any other medication, side effects can occur which need immediate attention. In your package insert you can read about these warning signs.

How do I get the routine, how to remember?

When you start taking the pill during the first five days of your cycle you enjoy protection against pregnancy immediately. The first tablet in every pack that follows will always be taken on the same day of the week.

If you start taking the pill on a later day in the cycle you have to use a backup method of contraception for the first 21 days. Some health care providers may encourage you to take your first pill while you are in their office ("Quick Start"). If you are not within the first five days of your cycle you need to use a backup method.

There are tools to remember to take the pill everyday, such as electronic cards, e-mail, text message reminders, etc. Contact your physician, pharmacist or the manufacturer of your OC brand to obtain one of these handy tools.



Here is how to take the pill:



Monophasic 21-day pack:

In a 21-day pack **all pills contain hormones**. Take the first pill of the pack during the first 5 days of your cycle. Take one pill every day until the pack is finished. Then wait seven days and start the next pack. During the seven-day hormone-free interval you will probably experience bleeding. However, it is very important that you start your new pack after seven days regardless of whether bleeding has occurred or not, or whether it is still going on.



Monophasic 28-day pack:

In a 28-day pack only the first 21 pills contain hormones. Different colours indicate the two types of pills (hormonal pills and “sugar pills”). Take the first pill of the pack within the first 5 days of your cycle. Take one pill every day until the pack is finished. Then start with the new pack.

Biphasic/Triphasic pills:

Different colours indicate hormonal pills of different dosage as well as the placebo pills. Take the first pill of the pack within the first 5 days of your cycle. Take one pill every day until the pack is finished. Then start with the new pack.

Continuous use (exceptional, if advised by health care provider):

Take pills with hormone contents every day of your cycle and skip the hormone-free interval. This works best with monophasic pills.