



THE MINI-PILL

Background.

The Mini-Pill is a birth control pill that contains only progestin. The Mini-Pill prevents pregnancy by suppressing ovulation and thickening cervical mucous. The Mini-Pill is the birth control pill of choice when a woman can not use estrogen-containing pills due to medical reasons or breastfeeding. Because the Mini-Pill has no estrogen, women may have irregular spotting or no periods at all.

Mini-Pill pill packs contain 28 days of active hormone. There are sugar pills or hormone-free days. Compared to other progestin-only contraceptive options, the Mini-Pill delivers more hormone than the Nexplanon implant and less hormone than Depo-Provera injections. When used exactly as directed the Mini-Pill is 98% effective.

Starting “The Pill”.

The Mini-pill has to be taken at the same time everyday! Changes in timing the daily dose can put one at risk for ovulation and pregnancy.

Start the Pill during the week of your period, or as instructed. Back-up contraception (abstinence or condoms) is required for the first 7 days in using the Mini-Pill.

Missing a Pill.

Forgetting to take pills is a common problem, even with the best intentions. If this happens too often, the Mini-pill is probably NOT a good form of contraception for you. Here is what to do if you miss a pill.

ONE MISSED PILL	Take your pill as soon as you remember, take the next pill at your regular time. If your missed pill is longer than 3 hours past your normal time, use back-up contraception for the next 3 days
TWO MISSED PILLS	You are <i>not</i> covered for contraception. Restart your contraception taking it at the same time. Use back-up contraception for 7 days.

Frequently Asked Questions.

Q: What should I do if I have continuous spotting when I don't expect it?

A: Irregular light bleeding and spotting is a common side effect while using the Mini-pill. . If you have irregular heavy bleeding or if symptoms are associated with PAIN or FOUL ODOR, schedule an appointment.

Q: What if I don't have a period?

A: Absent periods is a common side effect with Mini-Pill. If you miss a period or do not have any spotting for longer than six weeks, it is prudent to do a home pregnancy test. Absent periods may be a new, normal pattern. Call the doctor's office for advice if you are uncertain..

Q: Is there a risk of infertility from using birth control pills or the Mini-pill?

A. No. When discontinuing birth control pills, it may take a few months for your natural cycle and ovulation to resume. Most women are able to conceive within a year of stopping birth control pills. This is the same for women who do not take birth control pills.

Q: Do birth control pills cause breast cancer?

A: No. But women who have had breast cancer are encouraged to consider other forms of contraception.

Common Side Effects.

Women can expect their menstrual bleeding to be lighter and irregular. Most women do not feel inconvenienced by this, but about 10% of users will stop using the Mini-pill, because of irregular spotting.

Less Common Side Effects.

Headache

Mood Swings

Weight gain

Acne

Transient ovarian cysts

Ectopic pregnancy (rare)

ADVERSE RISK and DANGER SIGNS.

Smoking while using the Mini-pill increases the risk of stroke and heart attack. (These risks are less than risks for stroke and heart attack associated with pregnancy.)

SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IF YOU EXPERIENCE THESE SYMPTOMS.

Severe abdominal pain.

Heavy unusual bleeding.

Missed period/positive pregnancy test.

Exposure to STD.

Vaginal discharge is foul.