



مؤسسة الرعاية الصحية الأولية  
PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CORPORATION

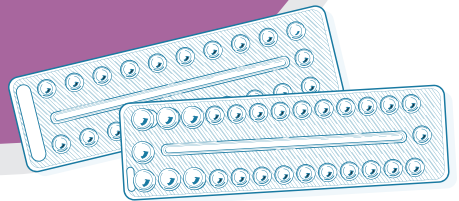
# Combined oral Contraceptive pill For birth spacing



[www.phcc.qa](http://www.phcc.qa)

### **Combined oral contraception (COC)**

is a form of oral contraception used by women to prevent pregnancy. The pill contains estrogen and progestogen hormones that are similar to the natural hormones women produce in their ovaries. The pack may contain either 21 or 28 tablets.



## How do the pills work?

- Thickens the mucus around the cervix. This makes it difficult for sperm to move through the cervix and reach an egg.
- Prevents the egg from maturing and being released from the ovary.
- Makes the lining of the uterus thinner, so it's less likely to accept a fertilized egg.

## How effective is Combined Oral Contraceptive pill?

If used correctly, it is 99.5% effective in preventing pregnancy. However, with improper use, its effectiveness is reduced to 91%.

## Advantages of use

- It reduces ovulation pain, menstrual pain and blood loss.
- It does not interfere with sexual intercourse.
- It reduces the risk of ovarian cyst, and some cancers such as ovarian, uterine and colon cancer.
- It can improve acne.
- It may help protect against excess facial and body hair.

## Disadvantages of use

- It may cause irregular bleeding and spotting in the first few months of use.
- It may shorten the period cycle or stop period.
- It reduce breast milk production
- It may cause temporary side effects at the beginning of use, such as headache, nausea, breast tenderness and mood changes.

**If you experience any side effects after taking the pill, inform your healthcare professional.**

## How do you use Combined Oral Contraceptive pill?

- Choose the most convenient time to take the pill. Take one pill at the exact same time each day
- The first pill should be taken during the first 1-5 days of your period. If the pill is taken after day five of your period, then you need to use an additional contraceptive method for the next 7 days.

**For 21 tablets pack, take the pill daily until the pack is finished and then have a break for 7 days. Then start new pack.**

**For 28 tablet pack, continue taking the pills for the next 28 days and then start the next pack without a break for effective contraception. The 28 day pack contains 21 hormonal pills with 7 extra non hormonal pills (the non-hormone pill usually colored differently from the other pills in the pack).**

- After miscarriage, you can take the pill between days 1-5. If the pill is taken after day 5 following your miscarriage, then you need an additional contraceptive method, like condoms, for the next 7 days.
- After giving birth and you are non-breastfeeding: start the pill after day 21 of your delivery, then you will need to use additional contraception, like condoms, for 7 days. If you are breastfeeding, delay initiation of the pill until 6 months after delivery.

## **What to do if you miss your pill?**

- Take a missed hormonal pill as soon as possible.
- Keep taking pills as usual, one each day. (She may take 2 pills at the same time or on the same day.)

## **Missed 1 or 2 pills? Started new pack 1 or 2 days late?**

- Take a hormonal pill as soon as possible.
- No additional contraception is needed..

## **Missed pills 3 or more days in a row in the first or second week? Started new pack 3 or more days late?**

- Take a hormonal pill as soon as possible.
- Use a backup method for the next 7 days.

## **Missed 3 or more pills in the third week?**

- Take a hormonal pill as soon as possible.
- Finish all hormonal pills in the pack. Throw away the 7 non hormonal pills in a -28pill pack.
- Start a new pack the next day.
- Use a backup method for the next 7 days.

## **Missed any non-hormonal pills? (last 7 pills in 28-pill pack)**

- Discard the missed non hormonal pill(s).
- Keep taking COCs, one each day. Start the new pack as usual.

## Tips to ensure effectiveness

- Do not miss any pills and take your pills on time
- Pills should be stored at room temperature with proper ventilation.
- If vomiting occurs within 2 hours after taking the pill, take another pill as soon as possible
- If diarrhea continues for more than 24 hours; keep taking the pills as usual, but use an additional contraceptive method for 7 days.

**If you are on specific medicine, always mention that you are taking the Combined Oral Contraceptive pill because the effectiveness of this pill may be reduced if you take it with other medication**

## Return of Fertility:

Combined oral contraception is a short-acting contraceptive method, so your natural fertility will return immediately once you stop taking the pill.

## Remember:

Not everyone can use combined oral contraceptive pill as there are certain conditions that may not allow the use the pills. As such, it is essential to mention any illness or operation you have had. Consult your physician/health care professional at your registered health centre prior to use and if you need more information on contraceptive methods.

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