**Progestin-Only Pills**

**Mini Pill, The Pill, Birth Control Pill**

**How does the progestin-only pill work?**

- The progestin-only pill uses the hormone progestin to thicken cervical mucus (which prevents sperm from moving into the uterus) and sometimes prevents ovulation.
- There are **two types** of progestin-only pills: **Norethindrone**, which goes by a number of different brand names, and Drospirenone, which goes by the brand name **Slynd**.
- **There are combined hormonal pills that are different from progestin-only pills.**
- The pill works for people of **all weights, all ages, and those using gender affirming hormone therapy**.

**How do you use the progestin-only pill?**

- **take daily**
  - You need to see a provider (in-person or via telemedicine) to start using the pill.
  - You have to take a pill each day to prevent pregnancy, even if not having sex that day.

- • Get a prescription for the pill from your provider to fill at the pharmacy. Swallow one pill every day.
  - **Norethindrone**: Must be taken at the same time each day, within 3 hours of your usual time.
  - **Slynd**: Does not need to be taken at the exact same time each day.
  - If it is difficult to take the pill or you are vomiting, you can talk to your provider about putting the pill in your vagina up to the cervix, like a suppository.

**Privacy and control**

- A provider is needed to start and continue using the pill through ongoing prescriptions. There are also apps where you can get a prescription. You can decide to stop using the pill on your own.
- Your partner cannot see or feel the pill.
- Someone you live with or who you share insurance with may see a bill from your insurance.
- Someone may be able to find your pill pack or see you taking the pill.
- If anyone else is tracking your period, they may notice a change to your period.

**When starting the pill, will it work immediately?**

- **Norethindrone**: You can start **Norethindrone** at any time. The pill will take 48 hours to work. Use an additional contraceptive during those first 48 hours.

- **Slynd**: When starting **Slynd** on day 1 of your period, the pill will work immediately.

- **Slynd**: When starting at any other time, **Slynd** will take 48 hours to work. Use an additional contraceptive during those 48 hours.

**The pill may not be right for people who have or had**

- Some bariatric surgeries that change your absorption of food
- Lupus with positive or unknown antibodies

*This is not a complete list, talk to your provider about your medical history before starting this method.*

**Use emergency contraception if**

- **Norethindrone**: You take a pill outside of the 3 hour window in which you are supposed to take it or if you skip a pill entirely.
- **Slynd**: You take a pill more than 24 hours after your last pill or if you skip a pill entirely.
## How well does the pill prevent pregnancy?

- On average, **7 out of 100 people using the progestin-only pill will get pregnant each year.** This means it is **93% effective** with typical use. Typical use considers how easily a person can use the pill. Some people will not be able to take the pill every day and will miss some pills.
- With perfect use, meaning the pill is taken daily, **1 out of 100 people using the progestin-only pill will get pregnant each year.** It is **99% effective.**
- Some medications can make the pill not work as well.
- **You can use a non-hormonal method of contraception with the pill to provide more protection against pregnancy.**

## Side effects

**Sexually transmitted infections:** Does not prevent.
- Use external or internal condoms to lower your risk of all sexually transmitted infections.

**Period:** Can affect.
- The pill may cause spotting between periods.
- The pill may make your periods lighter.

**Period cramps:** Can lessen.

**Weight:** No effect.

**Acne:** Can worsen.

**Fertility return:** When you stop using the pill, you can get pregnant right away.

**Other possible side effects:**
- Breast tenderness or pain
- Nausea
- Headaches
- Vaginal spotting
- Face and body hair growth
- Ovarian cysts
- Decreased bone density
- High potassium levels
- Reduces symptoms of PCOS or endometriosis

**The pill helps lower risk for:**
- anemia; endometrial cancer; pelvic inflammatory disease

## Postpartum use

The progestin-only pill is **safe to use right after giving birth.** It has no effect on lactation, breastfeeding/chestfeeding, or infant development.

## Contact your provider if you have

- Abdominal pain
- Yellowing of the eyes or skin (jaundice)
- Chest pain
- Lump in breast
- Vision problems
- Seizures
- Severe headaches
- Fainting

## Questions to ask your provider

- What if I throw up after taking the pill?
- What medications make the pill less effective?
- How do the two progestin-only pills differ? Which is right for me?
- What if I accidentally take two pills one day?
- How long of a prescription can you give me?

Scan for a contraception guide and information sheets on each method.

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