

## What if I Miss Pills?

- If you miss pills, you may become pregnant and you may also have some break-through bleeding.
- If you take a pill more than three hours late, take it as soon as you remember it. Use a back-up method (condoms, film, foam) for the next 48 hours to prevent pregnancy.
- If you forget to take your pill one day, take the pill as soon as you remember it. Take your next pill at the usual time. It is okay to take two pills at the same time if you forget one. Use a back-up method for the rest of your pill pack to prevent pregnancy.



## Pill Warning Signs

You have chosen the mini-pill as your method of birth control. Health problems with pills are rare. The following are warning signs of problems. Remember the initials “ADRP.”

- A**- Abdominal pain
- D**- Delayed period after several months of regular cycles
- R**- Repeated, very severe headaches
- P**- Pill taken too late (more than three hours past normal time)

If you experience any of these warning signs, call your health care provider as soon as possible.

Mini-pills are a very good method if taken right. No method is 100% effective, except for abstinence (not having sex).

If you have any questions, call:

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## Taking Progestin-Only Birth Control Pills



[www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov)

*We promote and protect the health of the public  
and the environment.*

## Starting Your Pills

Start your pills in one of the following ways:

- Quick Start** - Start your pills today if you are not pregnant and have not had unprotected sex since your last period.
- First Day Start** - Start on the first day of your menstrual period.

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- Use a back-up method of birth control each time you have sex until you start your pills and **during the first week (seven days) of your first pack of pills.**
- Back-up methods of birth control include condoms and contraceptive film or foam.
- Some women have spotting or breakthrough bleeding when they take the first 2-3 packs of pills. If you have spotting or breakthrough bleeding for longer, call the public health department and talk to the nurse.
- Read the package insert that comes with your pill pack.

## Taking Your Pills

- Take one pill by mouth every day. **It is very important for you to take your pill at the same time every day!** It may help you remember to take your pill if you associate it with something you do at the same time every day, like brushing your teeth.
- If you have a cell phone, set an alarm to remind you take to your pill every day.
- Check your pill pack to be sure you took your pill the day before.
- As soon as you finish one pack of pills, start the next pack of pills the very next day. Never miss a day when you are taking pills.
- Mark your calendar to remind yourself when to start your next pack of pills. Some women mark their calendars each day after they take their pill.
- Use a back-up method of birth control if any of the following happen:
  - You miss taking a pill
  - You are late starting your new pill pack
  - You have severe vomiting or diarrhea
  - You have break-through bleeding or spotting
- You may need to use a back-up method if you start taking certain medicines. Ask your health care provider or pharmacist if you need to use a back up method before starting a medication. This includes over-the-counter medicines and herbal products.



- Many women have shorter, lighter periods when taking the pill. As long as you have taken your pills on time every day and have not missed any pills, if you do not have a period, you are probably not pregnant. Sometimes women skip periods when taking birth control pills.
- If you miss two periods, or if you have missed pills and do not have a period, call the public health department and ask the nurse if you need to have a pregnancy test.
- You do NOT need to take a “rest” from birth control pills. **If you stop taking your pills, you are not protected from getting pregnant!**
- If you are thinking about stopping your pills, **DO NOT stop your pills** until you talk to a nurse at the public health department.
- Birth control pills DO NOT protect you from HIV, AIDS, or other sexually transmitted diseases. Always choose your partner carefully and use a condom.
- Contact the public health department for an appointment when:  
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