

SAGINAW COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
PERSONAL AND PREVENTIVE HEALTH SERVICES
FAMILY PLANNING

COMBINED ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE (BIRTH CONTROL PILL) FACT SHEET

The pill contains two hormones, estrogen, and progestin - similar to the hormones produced by a woman's body. These hormones prevent ovaries from releasing an egg, preventing pregnancy. These hormones also create a mucous plug to slow sperm coming through the vagina.

EFFECTIVENESS:

- Real- world use 97.5% effective

USE:

There are 3 ways to start your first pack:

- Same day start may be indicated with clinician approval **OR**
- First day start – Start pill on the first day of next period. No back-up method needed.
OR
- Sunday start- Start the pill the first Sunday after your period starts. If your period starts on Sunday, start the pill that same day. ** Important- If your period starts on Monday, use a back-up birth control method for the next 7 days, otherwise, no back -up method needed.

For all start times:

- Take the pill at the same time every day.
- If you forget to take your pill, take it as soon as you remember.
- If you don't realize it until the next day, take both pills at the same time.
- Use another method of birth control for 7 days if this happens.
- If you forget 2 pills, take 2 pills for two days.
- Use another method of birth control for 7 days if this happens.
- If you forget for 3 or more days call the clinic.
- Emergency contraception (EC) is available if you had sex after missing or taking your pills late

BENEFITS:

- Predictable menstrual cycles, with decreased cramping and blood loss.
- Decreased acne.
- Decreased risk of ectopic (tubal) pregnancy.
- Reduction of menstrual related Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS)
- Reduced chance of ovarian cysts, ovarian cancer, and cancer in the lining of the uterus.

DISCONTINUATION:

- If you miss three or more pills you may get pregnant.
- If you have had unprotected sex after missing three pills, call the clinic about emergency contraception.
- When you stop taking the pill, you might return to your normal fertility within 2 weeks.

SIDE EFFECTS:

- Nausea

- Breast tenderness
- Headaches - if severe call the clinic immediately.
- Spotting between periods – will usually stop in 2 to 4 cycles. If it does not stop, call the clinic.
- Missed periods - do not stop taking the pill.
- Mood changes and changes in sex drive.
- Increased vaginal secretions. If you notice burning, itching, or an odor, call the clinic.

WARNING SIGNS:

- **A** -severe Abdominal pain.
- **C**- severe Chest pain.
- **H**- severe Headache.
- **E** -Eye problems: blurring spots before the eyes, blindness.
- **S** -Severe leg pain.

RISKS AND COMPLICATIONS:

- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Blood Clots
- High blood pressure

Remember, Combined Oral Contraceptives do not protect against any sexually transmitted infections, so it is important to use condoms each time you have sex.

PERSONAL HEALTH CENTER
989-758-3870

Visit our website: www.saginawpublichealth.org



This publication was supported by the Office of Population Affairs (OPA) of the U.S. Department, of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial award totaling \$212,839 with 22.57 percentage funded by OPA/OASH/HHS and \$730,300 amount and 77.43 percentage funded by non-government source(s). The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by OPA/OASH/HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit: <https://opa.hhs.gov/>.

Reference: Hatcher, R.A., et al, (2018) Contraceptive Technology (21st Edition)
New York, NY: Irvington Publishers, Inc.
Quality Family Planning Services & Contraceptive Guidelines for Michigan Family Planning Providers (2023)

