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| **When do I start my pil**l**s?** You can start your pills on any day of your cycle.  If you are starting the pills after taking emergency contraception (EC)   * If you took ulipristal acetate (UPA) EC, wait at least 5 days after the unprotected sex to start. * If you took levonorgestrel (LNG) EC, start right away. * Your doctor or nurse can also help you figure out which will work best for you. |
| How do I take my pills? Swallow a pill every day, about the same time every day. |
| Will my pills work right away? Not always. If you start your pills   * Within 5 days of the start of your period, you do not need backup birth control. * After the first 5 days of your period, use backup birth control – like condoms – or don’t have sex for 7 days * After taking UPA EC, use backup birth control or don’t have sex for 14 days. * After taking LNG EC, use backup birth control or don’t have sex for 7 days. |

**How do I avoid missing pills?** Common reasons for missing pills are

* Being away from home without the pills
* Forgetting to take it, falling asleep and forgetting
* Not getting a refill on time
* Disruptions to routines
* Pressures (final exams, job stress)
* Being sick and throwing up

Reminders work best to avoid gaps! What reminders can you use? If your reminder fails, what back up reminder plan could you use?

What do I do if I miss pills? If you miss pills or start your pack late it may not work as well. The chance of getting pregnant depends on when and how many pills you missed. Once it’s been more than 1 day since the time you should have taken it, the pill is considered missed.

Can I get pregnant if I forget to take pills? Yes, depending on the timing you may want to take EC. It can be started up to 5 days after unprotected sex. Call us to get more information. We can help you decide.

Emergency Contraception (EC)- Accidents happen. That’s why it’s important to remember that EC can reduce the risk of pregnancy. If you missed using your ring and have had unprotected sex in the last 5 days, consider taking EC. EC includes the insertion of a copper IUD and “morning after” pill. All work best when started as soon as possible, within 5 days of unprotected sex.

It’s up to you if you want to have a period or not.

If you want to have a period every month

* Swallow one pill every day, as close to the same time as possible. Take all hormone pills first, finish with reminder pills, then start a new pack. Taking pills this way will give you a period about every 4 weeks.
* It’s okay to skip your reminder pills. There’s no hormone in them, so skipping them won’t make your pills less effective.

If you want to choose when you have a period

* Take the first 3 weeks of hormone pills. After taking the last hormone pill, skip the reminder pills and start a new pack the next day. Continue taking only the hormone pills to avoid having your period.
* When you’re ready to have a period, and after you’ve been on the hormone pills at least 3 weeks, take the reminder pills for up to 7 days at a time.

If you don’t want to get a period, only take the hormone pills in each pack with no break between packs.

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| What happened? | When in the pill pack? | What should I do? | Do I need to use back-up birth control or not have sex? |
| I took 1 hormone pill late.  (Less than 1 day since I should have taken my pill.) | Anytime. | * Take the late pill as soon as possible. * Take the rest of your pills at the usual time. * This means you may take 2 pills in 1 day. | No. |
| I missed 1 hormone pill.  (One to less than 2 days since I should have taken my pill.) | Anytime. | * Take the missed pill as soon as possible. * Take the rest of your pills at the usual time. * This means you may take 2 pills in 1 day. | No. |
| I missed 2 or more hormone pills in a row.  (2 or more days since I should have taken a pill) | Week 1 or 2 | * Take the most recent missed pill as soon as possible. * Throw away any other missed pills. * Keep taking the remaining pills in your pack, even if you take 2 pills in 1 day. | **Yes, for 7 days.** |
| I missed 2 or more hormone pills in a row.  (2 or more days since I should have taken a pill) | Week 3 | * Take the most recent missed pill as soon as possible. * Throw away any other missed pills. * Finish the rest of the hormone pills in your pack, then start a new pack the next day. This means you will skip the reminder pills. | **Yes, for 7 days.** |
| I missed reminder pills.  (It doesn’t matter how many.) | Week 4 | * Throw away. * Take the next reminder pill at your usual time. | No. |

**How do I get refills?** Come to the clinic any time, no appointment needed, or use Pills By Mail (ask our staff for information. How will you remember to get your refill? Set a reminder for this, too! Form a backup plan for what to do if something stops you from getting your refill.

**What if I want some other birth control method?**  **DO NOT STOP** your current method to avoid gaps. Call or stop by the clinic and talk with staff. Remember, if you stop your method you might get pregnant.