

Education Materials on Oral Contraception (OCP) for Patients with Low-Literacy

Document:

How to start taking birth control pills - English
How to start taking birth control pills – Spanish
About side effects - English
About side effects - Spanish
What happens if you miss your birth control pills? - English
What happens if you miss your birth control pills? - Spanish

Resource Description:

As described in the QFP¹ “(e)ducational materials should be provided that are clear and easy to understand” and “need to be presented in a format that is clear and easy to interpret by clients with a 4th to 6th grade reading level.”^{2,3,4} A study in one public health clinic found while 93% of OCP users understood what to do when they missed one pill, the percentage dropped to 19% when two pills were missed, and 13% for three.⁵

Because of the popularity of pill use in the U.S.⁶ and the complexity of missed pills instructions, these patient education materials were developed and tested with family planning clients in Title X clinics.⁷

Suggestions for Using the Patient Education Materials

Use the materials interactively with your clients. Point out the messages as you go over them. The materials use lots of white space to make it easier to read and understand the information, but you can also use the white space to tailor the information for that client. Here’s an example:

¹ Gavin, L., Moskosky, S., Carter, M., et al. Providing Quality Family Planning Services: Recommendations of CDC and the U. S. Office of Population Affairs. MMWR Recomm Rep. 2014; 63: 1-54, Appendix E.

² Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Toolkit for making written material clear and effective. Baltimore, MD: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; 2011.

³ US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Health literacy online: A guide to writing and designing easy-to-use health Web sites. Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services; 2010.

⁴ DeWalt D, Callahan L, Hawk V, et al. Health literacy universal precautions toolkit. AHRQ Publication No. 10–0046-EF. Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; 2010.

⁵ Davis, TC, Fredrickson, DD, Potter, L, Brouillette, R, Bocchini, AC, Williams, MV, Parker, RM. Patient understanding and use of oral contraceptive pills in a southern public health family planning clinic. Southern Medical Journal 2006; 99(7): 713-718.

⁶ http://www.gutmacher.org/pubs/fb_contr_use.html

⁷ <http://www.cardeaservices.org/ourwork/projects/health-literacy-project-oral-contraceptive-patient-education-materials>



Instructions for Printing the Materials: Handouts

Open the pdf of the 8x11 patient education materials on your computer and *enter your clinic's phone number in the box* that now has this: (111) 222-3333. Put your cursor in that box and type in your number. (You can't save this number in the pdf, so you will have to enter it each time you print more.) Then, print as many copies as you need at any one time.

You can print them double sided so you can have English on one side and Spanish on the other. Or you can print "How to Start" on one side, and "Missed Pills" on the other, in the same language. "Side Effects" is already 2 pages, so printing that double sided would be best.

The pdfs are designed to print in black and white as well as in color, so you can use them even if you don't have a color printer. However, it is best to print them directly from the pdf on your computer, rather than photocopying them. The illustrations will not be as clear in a photocopy.

Instructions for Printing the Materials: Posters

The pdfs for the 8 x 11 factsheets can be printed in poster size by any online printing service. Give the printing service the link to the factsheet pdf you want, and they can print as many as you need, in a variety of sizes. There is no need to change any aspect of the pdf—but be sure you give the printing service your clinic phone number so they can type it in before they print.

Type:

Patient education materials

CE Offered:

No

How to start taking birth control pills.

There are three ways to start the pill. Your nurse or doctor will help you decide which way is best for you.

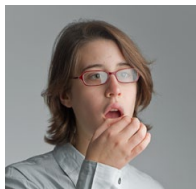
First Day Start



Take the first pill in the pack within the first five days of beginning menstrual bleeding.



Quick Start

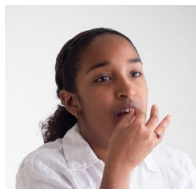


Take the first pill in the pack today.



Use condoms or do not have sex for **7** days after you start.

Sunday Start



Take the first pill in the pack on the first Sunday after you start bleeding.



If your bleeding starts on Sunday, that is the first Sunday. Take your pills that day.



Use condoms or do not have sex for **7** days after you start.

For all three start types—Quick Start, First Day Start, and Sunday Start—

After your first pill:

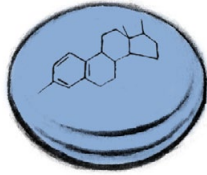
- Take one pill every day.
- Take your pill at the same time every day.
- Be careful not to skip pills.



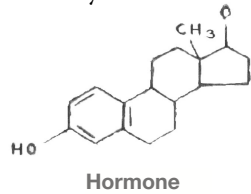
Questions?
Call your clinic at

(111) 222-3333

About Side Effects



The pills you are taking have hormones (chemicals) that are like the ones your body makes naturally.



Taking these pills changes the amount of hormones in your body.



It might take a while to get used to the change.

Most people don't have side effects. These are the most common normal side effects

Mood swings



Feeling sick to your stomach



Weight changes



Bleeding or spotting between periods



Sore breasts



Things That Can Help

- Give your body 1 or 2 months to get used to the pill. These side effects usually don't last.
- Your pill might not be the reason you are feeling bad. For example, you may have a headache because you are getting the flu.



- You might have these side effects if you:
 - miss a pill
 - take more than one pill at a time
 - take them at different times of day

Try to take your pill every day, **at the same time**. Many women use their cell phone alarms as a reminder.

- If you are feeling sick to your stomach, try taking your pill after eating a meal.



- You can always call the clinic if something doesn't seem right or if you are worried. Your doctor or nurse may be able to change the kind of pill you are taking.

Always use condoms if you stop taking the pill!
 If you stop taking the pill before you change to another kind of birth control, you might get pregnant.

Serious Side Effects

Call your clinic or doctor right away if you have:



(111) 222-3333



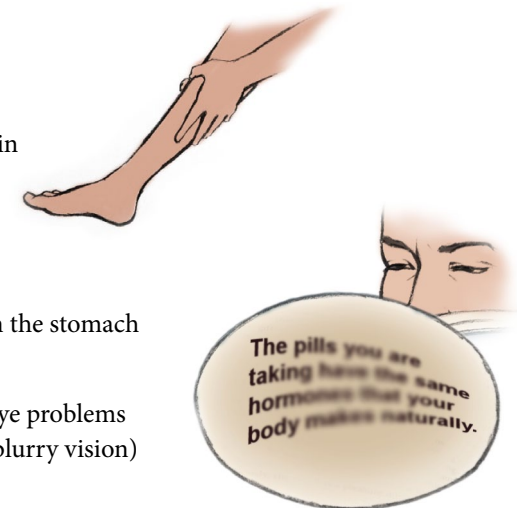
Very bad pain in the chest

Very bad leg pain

Very bad headache

Very bad pain in the stomach

Eye problems
(blurry vision)



The pills you are taking have the same hormones that your body makes naturally.

What happens if you miss your birth control pills?

You could get pregnant.

You may have some bleeding between periods.

You may want to choose another kind of birth control if you miss your pills a lot.

What do you do if you miss pills?

If you miss 1 pill or you take it late



- 1 Take the pill you missed now.



- 2 Take the next pill at the usual time.



If you miss 2 or more pills



- 1 **Today**, take the **most recent** pill you missed. Discard any other missed pills.



Today



Tomorrow



Most Recent

- 2 **Tomorrow**, take the next pill at the usual time.

- 3 Take the rest as usual.



- 4 Use condoms or do not have sex for **7** days.

If you missed pills in the last week of hormonal pills (e.g., days 15-21 for 28-day pill packs), just finish the hormonal pills in the current pack, one a day, and start a new pack when you've taken them all.

If you can't start a new pack immediately, use a back-up method (e.g., condoms) or don't have sex until you've taken 7 days of pills from a new pack.

What can you do if you miss any pills and have had sex without a condom?



Ask right away about the emergency pills at your clinic or a pharmacy.

(111) 222-3333