



THE COMBINED ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE PILL

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If you start taking your pill on day 1-5 of your period, you will be protected from pregnancy straight away

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If you are advised to start it on any other day you need to use **CONDOMS** or **AVOID SEX** for the first 7 days.

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You should take your pill at the same time each day for 21 days (3 weeks)

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You then have a **7 day break** before starting the next pack

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During this break you will have a 'withdrawal bleed' which seems just like a period. You are protected from pregnancy during these 7 days.

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Start the next strip of pills after your 7 day break whether you are still bleeding or not. You should always start the first pill of each new strip on the **SAME DAY** of the week.

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There is a **24 HOUR WINDOW** for each pill. If one pill is missed, take it straight away even if that means taking two pills on the same day. Continue taking the rest of the pack as usual.

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If **TWO** or **MORE PILLS** are missed anywhere in the pack, take the **LAST** missed pill now, even if that means taking two pills on the same day. Use **CONDOMS** or **AVOID SEX** for 7 days as your pill may not work.

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If you might have had 'unprotected sex' following missed pills, seek advice on whether **EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION** is also required. This is also true if you start a new strip more than two days late.

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If there are fewer than 7 pills left in the pack after the missed pills you should start your next pack **WITHOUT A BREAK**.

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SICKNESS, DIARRHOEA and **SOME OTHER TABLETS** can stop your pill working properly

ALWAYS READ THE MANUFACTURER'S PRINTED INFORMATION LEAFLET FROM INSIDE THE PACKET. YOU CAN USE AN APP AS A PILL TRACKER TO SUPPORT 'PERFECT' PILL USE.

<http://patient.info/health/combined-oral-contraceptive-pill>
<http://www.fpa.org.uk/contraception-help/combined-pill>