

Jane Finch Family Health Team

Patient Information: Birth Control Pill

How to take the birth control pill?

The pill should be taken the same time every day or as close to the same time every day to be most effective. Put it in a convenient place i.e. beside your toothbrush or set a reminder on your phone to take it.

What happens if I miss a pill?

If you miss **1 pill**, take it as soon as possible. If you forget for a full day take **2** the next day.

Eg. If you forget to take Monday's pill, take **2 pills** Tuesday

If you miss **2 pills**, take them as soon as possible but no more than 2 pills each day. Use condoms for the next week as a backup.

Eg. If you forget to take Monday and Tuesday's pills, take **2 pills** Wednesday and Thursday

If you forget to take **3 pills**, you **MUST** throw out the pack and start a new one. Use condoms for the next week as a backup.

What are side effects of the pill?

The most common side effect is irregular or 'break through' bleeding while taking the pill. This usually goes away in the first few months and is less likely if you take the pill at the same time every day.

Other common side effects:

Nausea, headaches, breast tenderness, changes in weight, lighter and less painful periods, mood changes.

Please let me know if these symptoms are bothering you.

What are risks of the pill?

The pill increases your risk of: blood clots, gallbladder problems

The pill **DOES NOT** protect against sexually transmitted diseases (gonorrhea, chlamydia, HIV). Only condoms protect against this

What are the benefits of the pill?

Birth control, lighter periods, regular periods, less painful periods, less benign breast problems, less ovarian cancer, less endometrial cancer