

SANILAC COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT – 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 making an egg, preventing pregnancy. These hormones also create a mucous plug to slow sperm coming through the vagina.

Effectiveness:

- 99.9% effective when taken every day at the same time.

Use:

- **Quick start** - if directed by your doctor, start taking the pill today. Use abstinence or a back-up method for 7 days.
- **First day start** is also an option; start your pills on the first day of your next period, no back-up method is needed.
- **Sunday Start** - Start the pill the first Sunday after your period starts. If your period starts on Sunday, start the pill that same day.
- Take the pill at the **same time every day**.

What if I forget a pill?

- If you forget to take your pill one time and it has been less than 48 hours since the pill should have been taken, take it as soon as you remember, even if it means taking two pills in the same day. No additional contraceptive protection is needed.
- If you don't realize it until the next day, take both pills at the same time.
- If you miss two or more consecutive pills and it has been more than 48 hours, take the most recent missed pill as soon as possible (any other missed pills should be discarded).
- Use another method of birth control or abstain from sexual intercourse for seven (7) days if this happens.
- If pills were missed in the last week of active pills (i.e. days – 15-21) finish the pack and skip the inactive ("period") pills and begin a new pack without stopping. Use a back-up method for 7 days. Emergency Contraception may be warranted depending on the time of last unprotected intercourse.

Benefits:

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

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, nervousness, and changes in sex drive.
- Increase vaginal secretions. If you notice burning, itching, or an odor, call the clinic.
- Hair loss, hirsutism, change in appetite

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

**\* IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THESE SIGNS, GO TO YOUR NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM**

Risks and Complications:

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

**REMEMBER, COMBINED ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES DO NOT PROTECT AGAINST ANY SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES, SO IT IS IMPORTANT TO USE CONDOMS EACH TIME YOU HAVE SEX.**

Visit our website: [www.sanilachealth.com](http://www.sanilachealth.com)



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