

Missed Periods

Periods while on the pill may be much lighter, so even one "spot of blood" may, in fact, be a pill period. You may even skip a period if you are on one of the low hormone pills. If you have taken all of your pills correctly and you miss a period, please contact your health care provider.

Other Considerations

If you have vomiting or diarrhea, for any reason, or if you take certain medications while on the pill, including some antibiotics, your pills may not be effective. Use a backup method (such as condoms with foam, sponge or film) until you check with your provider.

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs):

BCP's should be used in conjunction with condoms 100% of the time to decrease the transmission of STI's and to increase the effectiveness of contraception.

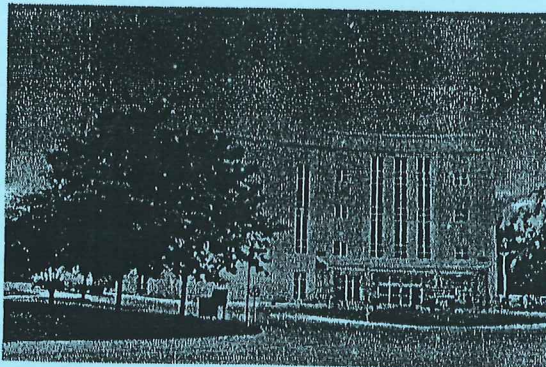
Using condoms may save your health, your fertility or even your life.

Call the Student Health Center if...

- You continue to have breakthrough bleeding after using 3-4 packs of pills.
- You have unusual symptoms that you think are pill-related.
- You miss a period and you have taken all of your pills correctly.
- You are experiencing any unresolved vaginal itching, burning, foul smelling discharge, abdominal pain or pain/bleeding with intercourse.
- You are concerned you might be pregnant.

Plan Ahead:

When you begin your last pack of pills, call to make an appointment to see your provider. For most women, an annual health exam is recommended.



Hours of Operation:

Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri:

8:00am-5:00pm

Wed: 9:00am-5:00pm

Closed every day from

11:45am - 12:45pm

Closed on official University Holidays

For After Hours Assistance

Dial 573.882.7481

Location:

4th Floor

University Physicians Medical Bldg.

1101 Hospital Drive

Columbia, MO 65212

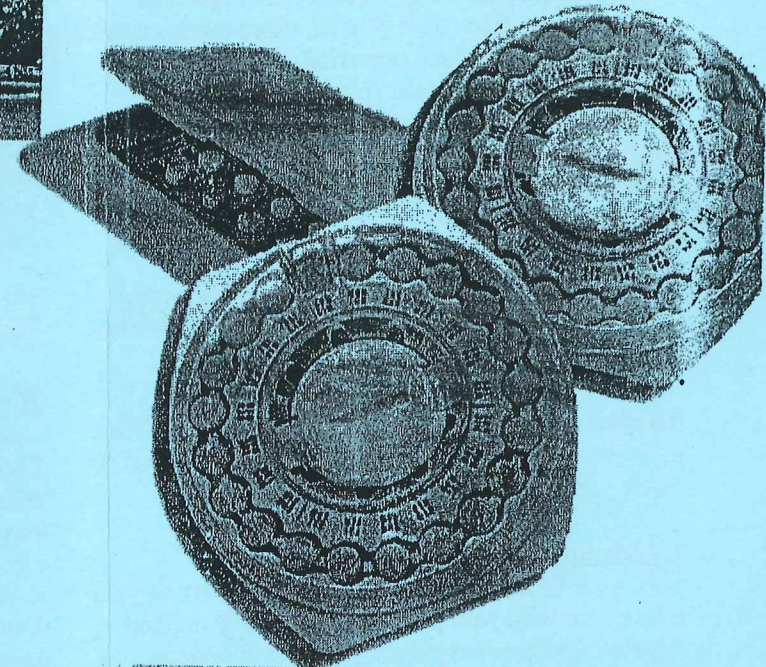
(573) 882.7481

For more information, visit:

www.studenthealth.missouri.edu

In order to be seen at the Student Health Center, you must present a valid MU student ID at each visit.

*What you need
to know about*



Birth Control Pills



**Student
HEALTH CENTER**

University of Missouri

573.882.7481

www.studenthealth.missouri.edu

BIRTH CONTROL PILLS

Birth Control Pills or Oral Contraceptives (BCPs or OCPs) contain one or two hormones similar to the hormones your body produces: estrogen and progesterone. The "active" pills, when taken correctly prevent ovulation from occurring, thus preventing pregnancy. The reminder (non-hormonal) pills usually signal the body to have a period (menses). **Some women, even if not sexually active, take BCPs to control painful menstrual cramps and regulate menses.**

GETTING STARTED ON THE PILL

There are 3 methods to begin taking your pills. Your provider can help determine which method is best for you:

Quick Start Method

Take your first pill in the pill pack on the day of your office visit with your provider. Using this method does not increase irregular spotting or bleeding.

• **Use another form of birth control for the first 7 days after starting your first pill pack.**

First Day Start Method

Take your first "active" pill in the pill pack during the first 24 hours of your period. You will begin each new pack thereafter on that same day of the week.

Sunday/Monday Start Method

Take your first "active" pill in the pill pack on the Sunday (or Monday) of or after your period begins (whether or not you are bleeding), which should give you weekends without periods. If your period begins on Sunday (or Monday) take your pill on that day. Each new pill pack will begin on Sunday (or

Monday). **Use another form of birth control for the first 7 days after starting your first pill pack.**

MISSING PILLS

Student Health Center Providers recommend the following management of missed pills.

If you miss 1 active pill...

Take it as soon as you remember. Take the next pill at your regular time. This means you will take 2 pills in 1 day.

If you miss 2 active pills in a row...

Take 2 pills a day for 2 days.

If you miss 3 or more active pills in a row...

...and you are a "quick starter" or "1st day starter"...
Throw away the rest of your pill pack and start a new pack that same day. Use a back-up method of contraception for the next 7 days.

...or...

... you are a Sunday (or Monday) starter...

Use a back-up method of contraception and keep taking 1 pill a day every day until Sunday (or Monday). On that day, throw away the rest of your pill pack and start a new pack that same day. Use a back-up method of contraception for the next 7 days.

You may become pregnant if you have unprotected sex in the 7 days after you miss 2 or more pills.

You MAY NOT have your regular period this month. This is to be expected.

Extended BCP's

Some BCP's can be used continuously to occasionally skip periods. If you are interested in this, seek the advice of your health care provider.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

The most common side effect of BCP'S during the first three months is breakthrough bleeding (a flow at anytime when your period is not due). You may notice only light spotting or you may have a heavy flow, similar to your regular period. Continue to take the pill on time. Call the Student Health Center to make an appointment if breakthrough bleeding continues after 3 packs of pills.

Other mild side effects you may notice include:

- slight nausea
- slight weight gain
- fluid retention
- diminished menstrual flow
- breast tenderness
- decreased cramping

Rare, but serious side effects that can occur are :

"ACHES"

- Abdominal pain (severe)
- Chest pain (severe) or shortness of breath
- Headache (severe)
- Eye problems- blurring or loss of vision
- Severe leg pains (calf or thigh)

These symptoms could occur with blood clots or other serious problems. If you experience any of these, call the Student Health Center or after hours, go to Urgent Care or the ER for an immediate evaluation.