



HORMONAL CONTRACEPTION

What you need to know

There are various types of hormonal contraception: a daily **pill**, a weekly **patch**, a monthly vaginal **ring**, an **injection** every 3 months or an **IUD** (intrauterine device).

Combined contraception

The pill

Each packet consists of 21 or 28 tablets that contain two natural hormones secreted by the female body: a combination of estrogen and progesterone (except for progesterone pill and morning-after pill which contain only progesterone).

In the packets containing 28 tablets, those for the last 4 to 7 days do not contain any hormones. These placebos provoke a **hormone-free interval**, (HFI) that will cause **withdrawal bleeding** (imitating menstruation).

How it works

The basic effect of the pill is to prevent ovulation. It affects also the neck of the cervix by making the mucus less permeable to sperm and by altering the inner lining of the uterus (endometrium), which becomes incapable of receiving a fertilized egg.

Effectiveness

It is very effective. However, if not used diligently (doses skipped), its efficiency can rapidly decrease.

When should you start?

You can begin immediately regardless of the period in the cycle.

You must protect yourself with the use of condoms for 7 days, except if you begin in the first 5 days of menstruation.



HORMONAL CONTRACEPTION

What you need to know

How?

One pill per day, every day **at about the same time**. The packet includes placebo tablets that provoke a hormone-free interval, (HFI) that will cause bleeding every 28 days. This is the **cyclic mode**. It is also possible to use the pill in a **continuous** manner* (monophasic or triphasic) with hormone-free intervals and bleeding only when necessary.

*Consult your health care practitioner.

Advantages

- Very **effective** and **reversible**
- Regulates the menstrual cycle
- Does not affect bone mass
- Often reduces:
 - Acne
 - Menstrual pain
 - Anemia, because of decreased bleeding
 - Premenstrual tension syndrome symptoms
 - Incidence of ovarian and endometrial cancers
 - Incidence of benign breast and ovarian tumors
 - Incidence of ectopic pregnancies
 - Symptoms of endometriosis

However, if they persist,
see your doctor, your nurse
or your health care
practitioner and
continue to take your
oral contraceptive.

Possible side effects

Side effects are **more frequent during the first 3 months** of use. They tend to disappear after this period.

- **Menstrual irregularities (spotting).** The effectiveness of the pill is not reduced if there was no missed dose(s), vomiting or diarrhea.
- **Nausea.** Can be reduced if taken at night.
- **Tenderness or swelling of the breasts.** Often temporary. Wear a bra with effective support. Reducing consumption of tobacco, salt, chocolate, coffee, tea and alcohol can also be helpful.



HORMONAL CONTRACEPTION

What you need to know

Smoking may increase the risk of venous thrombosis, especially in women over the age of 35.

- **Weight.** Usually remains unchanged. Weight gain is often due to an increase in appetite or water retention. Healthy eating and exercising are always recommended, whether or not you take oral contraceptives.
- **Abdominal pain.**
- **Light headaches.**

Complications

Although rare, complications require you to **discontinue the pills and immediately consult a doctor.**

- **Severe chest pain and difficulty breathing.**
Symptoms of heart attack or pulmonary embolism.
- **Severe headaches.** May be associated with migraines.
- **Blurred vision.** Decline or sudden loss of vision may be the predictor of a stroke.
- **Acute pain in the thighs or calves and/or swelling of the legs.**
Symptoms of thrombophlebitis.

If you forget your pill

Cyclical process

- If you forget to take your pill for a period of **24 hours or less**, take one pill as soon as possible and continue taking one pill daily.
- If you forget to take your pill for a period of **24 hours or more**
 - On 1st week: take one pill as soon as possible, continue to take one pill a day and finish the distributor as usual.
 - On 2nd and 3rd week: take one pill as soon as possible and continue to take one pill a day until the end of the 3rd week (skip the sugar pills), then start a new distributor.
 - Use condoms for 7 days after the missed dose. Depending on the number of pills you missed in a row, you may need an emergency contraceptive if there was unprotected sex or broken condoms 5 days before, during or after the time you missed your pills. You can consult the website www.sexandu.ca/contraception, your health care practitioner or Info-Santé to assess the presence of risks.





HORMONAL CONTRACEPTION

What you need to know

Continuous process

- Please refer to the explanatory leaflet “Continuous hormonal contraception”.

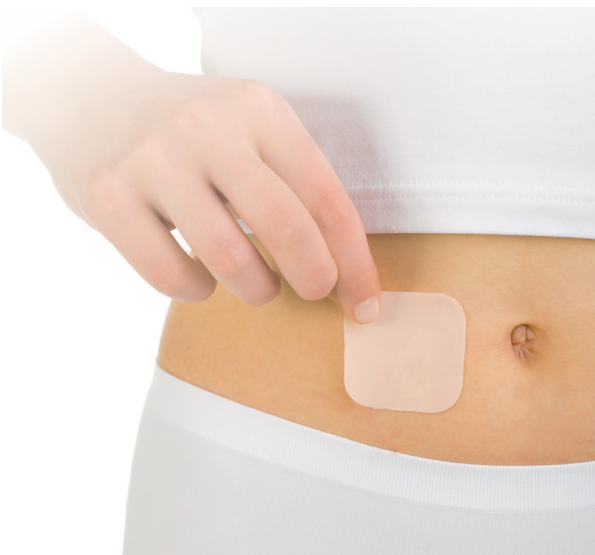
***ECP = EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILL** (morning-after pill)

Take within : 5 days or 120 hours after intercourse

Where to get it: FREE OF CHARGE at Youth Clinics in high schools or at your local CLSC. The ECP is also available for purchase in pharmacies, without prescription.

OTHER EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION :

The **copper IUD** is another option. Consult your health care practitioner.



Patch

The patch is applied to the skin; behind the shoulder, to the abdomen or above the buttock and is replaced every week.

The use of the patch can be **cyclic** (with a hormone-free interval, HFI, provoking withdrawal bleeding every 28 days), or **continuous*** (with hormone-free intervals/bleeding only when necessary).

*Consult your health care practitioner.

Side effects

- Same as oral contraception.
- Skin irritation or redness of the skin.

If a patch oversight occurs, consult the website www.sexandu.ca/contraception, your health care practitioner or Info-Santé.



HORMONAL CONTRACEPTION

What you need to know

Ring

A flexible ring that is inserted into the vagina and that remains in place 24 h/24. It is replaced once a month.

Its use can be **cyclic** (with hormone-free interval, HFI, provoking withdrawal bleeding every 28 days), or **continuous*** (with hormone-free intervals/bleeding only when necessary).

*Consult your health care practitioner.

Side effects

- Same as oral contraception.
- Increases vaginal discharge/dryness.

If a ring oversight occurs, consult the website www.sexandu.ca/contraception, your health care practitioner or Info-Santé.

Progesterone injection (without estrogen)

Injection

Injection of progestogens every 12 weeks.

You must renew your injection every 10 to 13 weeks following the last injection.

If your follow-up injection occurs beyond 14 weeks, take a pregnancy test before the next injection and repeat it 3 to 4 weeks later.

Side effects

- Mood swing, minor depressive disorder, tiredness, headaches and libido decreased.
- Loss of bone mass (reversible).
- Increase in appetite/possibility of weight gain.
- Prolonged irregular bleeding or absence of bleeding.
- Abdominal pain.





HORMONAL CONTRACEPTION

What you need to know

Resources

- Info-Santé : 8-1-1
- www.sexandu.ca
- www.sexplique.org
- www.planningchrr.com

Progestogen pill

Tablet that contains a hormone known as progesterone.

Must be taken **continuously** at the same time every day.

Intrauterine device, IUD

Small T-shaped flexible plastic frame that is inserted into the uterus. There are two types of devices: with hormone and without hormone (copper).

Consult your health care practitioner for more information.

Our mission

To maintain, improve, and restore the health and well-being of the Québec population by making accessible an array of integrated and quality health and social services, while contributing to the social and economic development of Québec.

Our vision

Accessible and efficient health care and services that adapt to the needs of Québécois.

Our goals

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest achieves its goals through its innovative approaches and stands apart through:

- its exemplary offer of care and integrated services based on interdisciplinarity, accessibility, and adaptability to the needs of its population;
- its willingness to question and improve its professional, clinical, and administrative practices;
- its appreciation of its personnel and the implementation of human resource management practices;
- its strong relationships with its partners.

Our values

Our actions are guided by five equal and interconnected values: compassion, collaboration, commitment, confidence and consistency.