

# PARVEEN S. VAHORA MD PA

## BIRTH CONTROL PILLS

1. Start your first pack on the first Sunday after your period starts. Starting on Sunday is easy to remember and usually means that you won't be menstruating on weekends. Swallow one pill a day until you finish the pack. Begin a new pack the next day.
2. Use a second method of birth control (like foam or condoms) during your first month on the pill. You aren't protected against pregnancy the first month.
3. Pills work best if you take them at the same time every day. At night after you brush your teeth or in the morning with breakfast. Take a rubber band and attach them to your toothpaste tube to help you remember.
4. Check the pack each morning to make sure you remembered to take your pill.
5. If you miss one pill, take the forgotten one as soon as you remember it, and then take that day's pill at the regular time. You probably won't get pregnant. Probably.
6. If you miss two pills, take two pills when you realize you forgot them, and then take two more at the regular time. Use foam and condoms until you finish the pack. You may experience spotting.
7. If you miss three or more pills your chances of ovulating go way up. Stop the pills. Use foam and condoms and start a new pack the Sunday after you start a period. You will again need to use foam and condoms the first 30 days until you have been on the pill consistently (for 30 days).
8. If you miss one or two pills and you skip a period, call the office and talk to a nurse.
9. Contact the office if you have breakthrough bleeding that lasts after the third month (it sometimes takes three months for your body to get used to the pill) on the pill, your pill may need to be changed. You will breakthrough bleed if you are missing pills a lot.
10. Always come for your yearly exam, Pap smear and breast exam.
11. If you are taking antibiotic you MUST use a back up method (condoms). Antibiotics will decrease the effectiveness of the pill.

### Side effects:

- ❖ About 40% of pill users have side effects of one kind or another. Here are the most commonly reported—Nausea, weight gain, fluid retention, breast fullness or tenderness, headaches, spotting, decreased menstrual flow, mood changes, acne, decreased sex drive, and possible skin darkening.
- ❖ Many of these side effects will go away or lessen as your body gets used to the pill. If not, they may (or may not) be eliminated by switching to another pill.
- ❖ Pills can also have drastic side effects. These are rare. The body usually sends warning signs of impending danger. Signs to watch for are:
  - Severe headaches
  - sudden blurring or loss of vision, a sensation of flashing lights
  - severe leg pains
  - chest pains or shortness of breath

If you should experience any of these signs call your doctor immediately. Remember, these are rare.