Hormonal Birth Control
Learn how hormonal contraceptives work

What are hormonal contraceptives?
A type of birth control that uses hormones to prevent pregnancy and help manage periods and certain medical conditions. They are:
- Safe for most women
- 99% effective at preventing pregnancy

Birth control is for more than just preventing pregnancy
Many women use hormonal birth control to manage health issues, not just to prevent pregnancy.

What types of hormonal contraceptives are there?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contraceptive Type</th>
<th>Method</th>
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<tr>
<td>The pill</td>
<td>A form of contraception you take by mouth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progestin injection</td>
<td>A shot once every 12 weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progestin implantable rod</td>
<td>Inserted under the skin, can remain for up to 5 years</td>
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How should you take oral contraceptives?
Every day for three weeks, with a week off. Some women can take the pill with no break, if approved by their healthcare provider.

Important:
Take your pill at the same time every day because they have a short half-life!

If you're 3 hours or later taking combination pills (estrogen and progestin), you should use a back-up method until your next period.

If you're 3 hours or later taking progestin-only pills (mini pill), you need back-up for at least 2 days.

What if you're late taking your pill?

Know when you'll have your period...
Hormone pills and vaginal rings can help regulate your period so it's not a surprise every month. And they can make the bleeding less severe.

...or skip it!
Hormonal IUDs and implants can stop periods altogether for some women, and make them lighter for others.

Planning a big getaway?
You can delay your period.
If your period is scheduled to start when you get to your destination, speak with your doctor about your contraceptive schedule and delaying your period.

Breakthrough bleeding
Breakthrough bleeding or spotting can happen with hormonal contraceptives. It's most common with low-dose pills and the implant. Stopping your period increases breakthrough bleeding risk.

Bleeding with hormonal IUDs usually improves after the first few months.

Remember
Hormonal contraceptives do not protect you from sexually transmitted infections, like syphilis, HIV and chlamydia.