ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE PILL INSTRUCTIONS

The pill works primarily by stopping ovulation. Pills are very effective if taken at the same time every day. In addition to preventing pregnancy, pills decrease your risk for developing ovarian cyst and benign breast masses. Pills decrease menstrual blood loss and menstrual cramps. Pills also decrease your chance of having an ectopic pregnancy, a pregnancy outside the uterus.

PILL START

Start your pills today. Take one pill a day at the same time until you finish the pack, and then begin a new pack immediately. Skip no days between packages.

Check your pack of pills each morning to make sure you took your pill the day before.

Back up Method

Choose a back-up method of birth control (such as condoms foam or abstinence) to use with your first pack of pills because the pills may not fully protect you from pregnancy during the first 7 days. Keep this back-up method handy at all times and learn to use it correctly in case you:

- Run out of pills
- Forget to take your pills for 24 hours or greater
- Experience a serious pill warning signal and discontinue pill use
- Want protection from STI’s (sexually transmitted infections)
- When taking Antibiotics
- If you are experiencing vomiting or diarrhea

Missed pills

- If you miss one pill, take that pill as soon as you remember it. Take your next pill at the regular time.
- If you miss two pills in a row, then take two pills as soon as you remember and take two tablets the next day. Then return to your regular schedule but use a back-up method of birth control for 7 days after two missed pills.
- If you miss three pills in a row you will probably begin your period. Whether you are menstruating or not stop that pack of pills and then start a new pack as you did when you first started the pill. Use a back-up method of birth control until you have been back on pills for 7 days
• **If you miss two periods in a row**, come in for a pregnancy test even if you took your pills correctly every day.

• **If you have not missed any pills and you miss one period**, without any signs of pregnancy, pregnancy is very unlikely. Call the clinic if you are concerned.

• **If you forget one or more pills and miss a period**, you should contact the clinic to schedule an appointment for pregnancy testing.

**EARLY PILL WARNING SIGNS**

A ♦ Abdominal pain (severe)

C ♦ Chest pain (severe), cough, shortness of breath

H ♦ Headaches (severe), dizziness, weakness or numbness

E ♦ Eye problems (vision loss or blurring), speech problems

S ♦ Severe leg pain (calf or thigh)

See your nurse practitioner if you have any of these problems, or if you develop depression, yellow jaundice, or a breast lump.

**Oral Contraceptive Pill**

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