

Temporary risk factors

- plane flights
- high altitude
- surgery
- temporary immobility.

The pill may be affected by

- medication for epilepsy
- rifampicin for Tb
- medication for HIV infection
- laxatives
- St John's Wort.

Ask your health professional whether any new medicine will affect your contraceptive pill.

If you have unprotected sexual intercourse contact a Family Planning Clinic or your doctor for emergency contraception within 72 hours (24 hours if possible). The sooner the better.

Condoms help protect against sexually transmissible infections.

Your Health Professional

familyplanning.org.nz

The Pill

Combined pill

Instructions for Use

Start your pill

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Take one pill at the same time every day until the packet is finished

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Start your next packet

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You should get your period

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You will be safe after **hormone pills** have been taken.

If you continue to take them regularly, you will be safe all the time. Until you are safe, you must either not have sexual intercourse or use another method of contraception such as condoms.

General rules for what to do if you miss pills

- If you miss one hormone pill, take it as soon as you remember, then take the next hormone pill at the usual time – this may mean taking 2 hormone pills together
- If you miss any 2 hormone pills within a week of each other, follow the 7 day rule

The 7 day rule

- **You will not be safe until you have taken 7 hormone pills in a row**
 - **Use another method of contraception such as condoms or do not have sexual intercourse while taking the 7 hormone pills**
 - **If during this time a condom breaks or slips off, you will need an emergency contraceptive pill (ECP)**
 - **If there are less than 7 hormone pills left in the pack, finish the hormone pills and start your new pack immediately (miss the 7 inactive pills or the 7 day break)**
- If you vomit or have severe diarrhoea for more than 24 hours, you should follow the 7 day rule and miss the 7 inactive pills (or 7 day break) if necessary
 - If you miss hormone pills, you may notice you start to bleed – this can continue throughout that packet. Continue to take your pills as usual

- If you are unsure what to do after missing one or more pills, phone for advice

These instructions have been updated according to international research (2006) but may not be the same as the instructions in your pill pack.

When first starting the pill

Some people notice changes such as feeling sick (especially if the pill is taken on an empty stomach), tender breasts and unexpected vaginal bleeding. These usually improve with time.

If you are concerned about any changes, we recommend that you do not stop the pill but phone for advice.

Your period may be lighter than usual, but if you miss your period, do not stop the pill - phone for advice.

Contact a Family Planning Clinic or your doctor at once if you have

- sudden chest pain or cough up blood or become short of breath
- a painful calf (lower part of the leg)
- a severe headache which affects your vision, speech, arms or legs.