

# Oral Contraceptive

Start on the first Sunday following the start of your period; i.e. period starts on Friday, start pills two days later on Sunday.

- Use back-up method for the first month and during antibiotic use. If antibiotic use occurs in the middle of the pack, continue with a back-up until after period and new pack is started
- Do not smoke while on OCPs. If you are a smoker, discuss alternative non-hormonal options with your health care provider
- Smoking while using OCPs greatly increases your risk of stroke or blood clots
- It is important to take the pill at the same time every day
- **If you miss one pill:** Take missed pill as soon as remembered and continue regular schedule
- **If you miss two pills in a row:** Take two pills daily for two days then finish the pack
- **If you miss three or more pills:** Begin a new pack and expect breakthrough bleeding until period starts, use back-up contraception
- Breakthrough bleeding is the most common side effect within the first three months of pill use
- Warning signs to seek immediate medical attention
  - A** Abdominal pain – severe
  - C** Chest pain
  - H** Headaches – severe
  - E** Eye problems – blurred vision, loss of vision
  - S** Swelling in leg or severe leg pain
- If you become pregnant, stop OCPs immediately
- OCPs are only 99 percent effective with perfect use and 97 percent effective with typical use so there is still a 3 percent chance of pregnancy

402.472.5000 • [health.unl.edu](http://health.unl.edu)

