



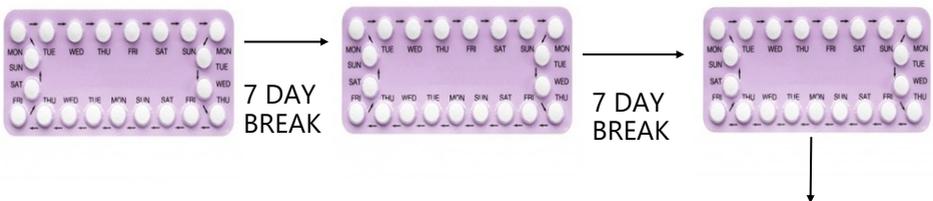
Contraception Information

Patient information leaflet for different ways to take the combined pill

Traditional regime

The combined pill was originally designed and licensed to be taken so that women would still have a bleed every four weeks. You don't have periods when you take the pill - you have a withdrawal bleed (which doesn't always happen). This is caused by you not taking hormones in the pill-free week. If you prefer to have a regular monthly bleed then you should take the pill in this way:

- Take one pill every day for 21 days (this is the amount of pills in one strip, you will have three strips in each packet). Start on the first or second day of your period, or you may be advised to start straight away by the nurse and use additional precautions (condoms) for the first seven days.
- When you have finished the strip you should have a seven day pill free break. During these seven days you will usually have a bleed that is often shorter and lighter than your natural period.
- On the eighth day you should start your next strip on time even if you are still bleeding. This means you will always start your new strip of pills on the same day of the week.



Get more pills if this is your last strip so that you do not run out

Shortened hormone (pill free) break

- Take one pill every day for 21 days (this is the amount of pills in one strip, you will have three strips in each packet) - Start on the first or second day of your period, or you may be advised to start straight away by the nurse and use additional precautions (condoms) for the first seven days.
- When you have finished the strip you should have a four day pill free break. During these four days you are likely to have a bleed that is often shorter and lighter than your natural period.
- On the fifth day you should start your next strip on time even if you are still bleeding.
- Because you are having a 4 day break instead of 7, the day you restart your pill packet will be different each time. Make sure you take the 1st pill on the correct day of your pill packet each time you restart after a 4 day break.



Get more pills if this is your last strip so that you do not run out

Tricycling

This means that you take three strips of the pill in a row without taking a break, then have a four or seven day break followed by a further three strips of the pill continuously without a break.

By taking the pill this way it will reduce the number of bleeds. This can help to alleviate some of the bothersome symptoms associated with your pill free week.



7 or 4 DAY BREAK



Remember to
get more pills
when you start
your last strip
so that you do
not run out

Tailored or continuous pill taking: (see image one)

You can take your pill strips back to back continuously without having a break but you may still have a bleed while taking the pills.

For continuous pill taking the following is advised (only after 21 days of continuous pill taking):

1. If you bleed for four days in a row while taking your pills continuously you may stop taking them for four days to have a bleed, as long as you have taken at least 21 pills continuously prior to this break. Pop these pills out of the strip and throw them away so that you stay on the correct day of the week when you restart your pills.
2. During these four days you are likely to continue to bleed.
3. On the 5th day you should restart taking your pills continuously again, one every day as before, even if you continue to bleed, this bleeding should then settle.
4. If you start bleeding again for more than four days in a row, you may stop for a four day break again as long as you have taken your pill for 21 days continuously, as in point 1.
5. There must always be at least 21 days of continuous pill taking between these four day breaks.

It is common for some women to always start bleeding after a certain length of time (for example during the fourth strip of pills). If this happens regularly you can take a planned four day break before the time that you are likely to start bleeding.

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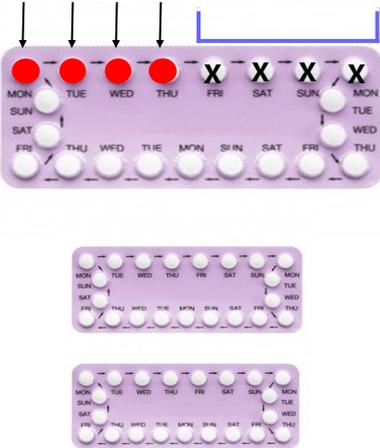
If you are getting bleeding or spotting more than once every two weeks or if you have any bleeding after sex you should speak with the college/school nurse who supplied your pills for further advice. It may be that you need a check-up for infections or to try a different pill.

If you have a holiday or special occasion coming up and you would like to avoid having a bleed during this time, you can deliberately take a four day break the week before to get the bleed over with as long as you have taken at least 21 pills continuously.

Image one:



If you bleed for four days in a row miss the next four pills then restart your strip



Is it safe to take my pill in this way?

Continuous pill taking/Tricycling and tailored regimes are what is known as 'off license' as the pills are being taken in a different way from how they were originally licensed to be used. There is no evidence that taking the pill in any of these ways is harmful.

Safe storage

- Away from children/pets
- Do not share with others
- Cool/dry place
- Try to avoid extremes of cold temperatures
- Dispose of excess by returning to a pharmacy

Concerns and complaints

We aim to provide you with a high quality service at all times.

However, if you have any concerns, complaints or comments about your experience of our service then please tell a member of the team or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on freephone:

0800 328 7971

If you would like to have information translated into a different language, please contact the Equality and Diversity Team at: EqualityandInclusion@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

Arabic يُرجى الاتصال بنا إذا كنتم ترغبون في الحصول على المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بتسيق مختلف.

Bengali আপনি এই তথ্য অন্য ভাষায় বা আলাদা আকারে পেতে চাইলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Urdu اگر آپ یہ معلومات دیگر زبان یا مختلف فارمیٹ میں چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

Chinese 若要以其他語言或格式提供這些資訊，請與我們聯繫

Polish Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, skontaktuj się z nami.

Portuguese Queira contactar-nos se pretender as informações noutra idioma ou num formato diferente.

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