



Health Services

University of Oklahoma
Student Affairs

Hours: 8 a.m.–6 p.m.
Telephone: 405 325-4611, Fax: 405 325-7065
Web: <http://goddard.ou.edu/healthed>

We pledge to treat you with dignity and respect and to provide you with competent and compassionate therapeutic services.

Charles B. Goddard Health Center
620 Elm Ave, Norman, Oklahoma 73019-2091
(Corner of Brooks Street and Elm Avenue)

This institution in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, financial aid, and educational services.

This publication was prepared and distributed at no cost to the taxpayers of the state of Oklahoma. Accommodations on the basis of disability are available by contacting the Employee Assistance Program at (405) 325-2911. 8/04



Accredited by

Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc.

Birth Control

Common Questions Regarding



Meeting the health needs of OU students, faculty, staff, and dependents

1 Common Questions Regarding

Before a woman decides on a method of contraception, she should consult a health care provider with questions and concerns. This brochure provides answers to commonly asked questions regarding birth control pills; however it is not a substitute for a visit with a health care provider and specific pill package inserts.

How Effective is the Pill in Preventing an Unplanned Pregnancy?

When taken correctly, the pill can be 95-99.9% effective in preventing an unplanned pregnancy.

Does the Pill Protect Against the Transmission of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)?

No. The pill does **not** offer any protection against the transmission of STDs. However, latex and polyurethane condoms offer some protection and may decrease one's risk.

Can the Pill be Purchased Without a Prescription?

No. A prescription must be written by a health care provider. In addition, yearly gynecological exams must be received in order to have a prescription renewed.

What are the Side-Effects Associated With the Pill?

Common side-effects may include:

- Change in appetite
- Depression
- Dizziness
- Fluid retention (may raise blood pressure)
- Headache
- Loss of scalp hair
- Melasma (spotty darkening of the skin, particularly on the face)
- Nausea and vomiting
- Nervousness
- Problems wearing contact lenses
- Vaginal bleeding or spotting (usually only during the first few months of use)
- Vaginal infections

2 Common Questions Regarding

Some **rare** serious side-effects include:

- Sharp chest pain
- Coughing of blood
- Sudden shortness of breath
- Pain in the calf muscles
- Sudden severe headache, dizziness, or fainting
- Disturbance of vision or speech
- Weakness or numbness in an arm or leg
- Breast lumps
- Severe pain or tenderness in the stomach area
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes)

What are the Risks Associated With Taking the Pill?

Risks associated with the use of birth control pills include:

- Development of blood clots (smoking increases these risks)
- Heart attack and stroke (smoking increases these risks)
- Gallbladder disease
- Liver tumors
- Cancer of the reproductive organs

Who Should Not Use the Pill?

Women who are considering taking the pill should contact their health care provider to discuss their medical history as well as the risks associated with the pill.

In general, it is advised that women with the following conditions do **not** take the pill.

- History of heart attack or stroke
- History of blood clots
- History of chest pain
- Known or suspected breast cancer or cancer of the reproductive organs
- Unexplained vaginal bleeding
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes)
- Liver cancer
- Known or suspected pregnancy
- An upcoming surgery or prolonged bed rest

References

www.managingcontraception.com (Managing Contraception)
www.orthotri-cyclen.com (Ortho Tri-Cyclen)