

# Progestin -Only Pills

Progestin-only pills (POPs) have one hormone, progestin that causes the lining of the uterus to thin and the cervical mucus (liquid at the uterine opening) to thicken, which stops sperm from reaching the egg.

## Effectiveness:

- Less than 1 out of 100 women will get pregnant each year if they always take the pill each day as directed
- About 9 out of 100 women will get pregnant each year if they don't always take the pill each day as directed

## You must take progestin-only pills at the same time every day

**You can start using the pill at any time, as long as you are not pregnant.**

Progestin-only pills come in 28-day packs with no hormone-free days. The thickening of cervical mucus happens within a couple of hours after you take a pill and will last for approximately 20 hours. A pill is considered "missed" if it has been more than three hours since you should have taken it.

**ADVANTAGES:** Pills are easy to use. They work very well if they are used the right way. Periods may be more regular, lighter and painful. Progestin-only pills do not contain estrogen, so they can be used by women who cannot take estrogen. The pill can be used right after childbirth, even if you are breastfeeding.

**DISADVANTAGES:** Progestin - only pills must be taken at the same time everyday. Some may find it hard to remember to take the pill or to take it at the same time of day.

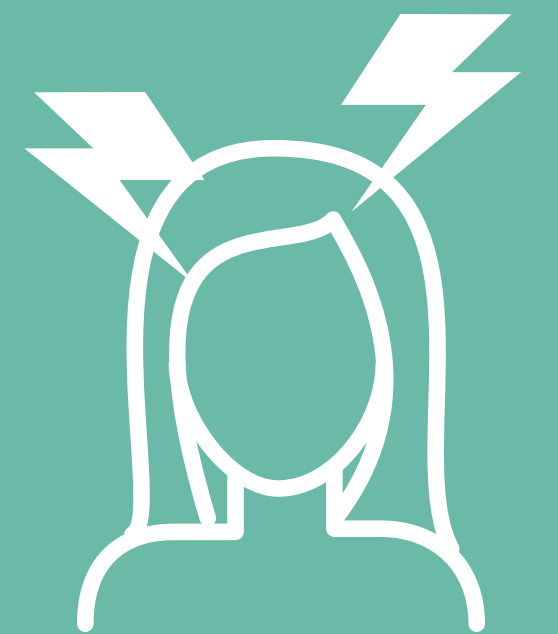
**You may not have any side effects from progestin-only pills.** However, many women may experience:

- Irregular bleeding, spotting, heavy bleeding or no bleeding at all
- Headaches
- Nausea
- Sore breasts
- Dizziness

You should not use progestin-only pills if:

- You are pregnant
- You have breast cancer now

## Side effects and Risks



Women who are 18 or older may receive their progestin-only pills through a participating pharmacist. Routine medical care is important for early detection and prevention of health issues. It is recommended that women see their health care provider yearly for recommended screenings to stay healthy. Long-acting reversible contraceptives, such as IUDs or the implant (Nexplanon), are 99% effective at preventing pregnancy. These methods can prevent pregnancy for up to 10 years. Talk to your provider/pharmacist to decide if these methods may be right for you.