



**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
**Family Planning Program**

**INFORMATION FOR PROGESTIN-ONLY PILLS (POP)**

The POP is approximately 92 percent to 99 percent effective if correctly taken each day.

**BENEFITS:**

- \* No estrogen effects
- \* Shorter periods with lighter flow
- \* Fewer menstrual cramps
- \* Fewer PMS symptoms
- \* Less pelvic inflammatory disease
- \* Less endometrial cancer
- \* May be used if breastfeeding

**RISKS/SIDE EFFECTS** (You may have the following side effects):

- \* Menstrual cycle changes
- \* Nausea
- \* Mood changes
- \* Occasional spotting and/or no period
- \* Headaches

POP's are not recommended if:

- \* There is a chance you are pregnant.
- \* You have malabsorption condition (bariatric surgery)
- \* You have breast cancer
- \* You have abnormal or unexplained vaginal bleeding that has not been diagnosed.
- \* You have been taking certain drugs for tuberculosis or seizures.
- \* You have liver tumors or liver disease.
- \* You have ever had an allergic reaction to any of the components of this medication.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

You have received information about the other methods of birth control available. For situations of suspected contraception failure, emergency contraception is available and offers a second chance to reduce the risk of unintended pregnancy.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

This instruction sheet provides information on how to use the POP and how it differs from other birth control pills.

The pill does not protect you against STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) and HIV.

You have received information about the progestin-only (POP) pills. If you take your pill late (even three hours), you risk becoming pregnant.

**DECISION TO STOP:**

You have the right to stop taking birth control pills at any time. A woman is most likely to become pregnant if she or her partner are not using a method of birth control.

**QUESTIONS:**

You may ask questions about birth control pills at any time and may contact the clinic with further questions.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING PROGESTIN-ONLY ORAL CONTRACEPTION

1. Have a backup method of birth control (such as foam, condoms or emergency contraception) on hand. A backup method is needed:
  - While you are waiting to start the pills.
  - Your first two days (48 hours) on the pills.
  - If you miss a pill by more than three hours from regular time (use a backup method for 48 hours).
2. There are three satisfactory ways to start taking your POP. You should discuss with your medical provider which approach would be best for you:
  - Start the first day of your menstrual period.
  - Start today if you are certain you aren't pregnant, using a backup method every time you have sex during the next 48 hours.
  - If you have a miscarriage or abortion, you can start the POP the next day.
3. Take a pill every day at the same time. When you finish one pack of pills, start on a new pack the next day. There is no break between packs.
4. Take your pills with an established habit such as brushing your teeth or eating a meal. This may help you remember to take your pill every day.
5. If you are more than three hours late or you miss one POP, take the missed pill as soon as you remember. Then go back to taking your pills at the regular time, but be sure to use a backup method every time you have sex for the next 48 hours.
6. If you miss two or more pills, there is a good chance you could become pregnant. Start using your backup method of birth control immediately. If you forget two pills, take two at once and two the next day.
7. Keep track of your periods. If you have more than 45 days without a period, notify the clinic or your provider.
8. You may have some bleeding or spotting between periods but continue taking your pills. If the bleeding is heavy or if you have cramps, pain or a fever: see your health-care provider. Bleeding is common during the first few months you are on the POP. You may not have a period while using POPs because there is no pill-free interval and all pills have hormones.
9. Your period may become irregular.
10. If you are ill or have vomiting or diarrhea, use your backup method of birth control along with your POP for 48 hours after your illness is over. Your illness or any medication(s) you might take can interfere with the effectiveness of the pill. Inform your doctor that you are on the pill.
11. Notify your health-care provider if you have severe lower abdominal pain while on the POP. Abdominal pain could be a cyst or ectopic (tubal) pregnancy. Don't stop taking your pills, but contact your clinic right away.
12. If you notice any mood changes: depression, irritability, change in sex drive, etc. -- call the clinic right away.
13. Be sure to read all the information you have received about POPs.