

Contraception

Guidance and Instruction for Use



Below are general, product-specific instructions for how each preparation is usually taken or used. Always follow your prescriber's advice.

Combined Hormonal Oral Contraceptive Pill

How to take: Take one pill daily at the same time each day and start on Days 1-5 of your menstrual cycle. If starting after Day 5, you will need additional precautions (abstaining from sexual intercourse or using condoms) for the first 7 days.

- **Traditional method:** take one active pill daily for 21 days followed by a 7 day break, repeat the cycle
- **Tricycling method:** take one active pill daily for 3 blister packs (21 days x 3 packs) followed by a 4 day break, repeat the cycle
- **Continuous method:** take one active pill daily without any breaks
- **Flexible extended method:** take one active pill daily and only have a 4 day break if there is a lot of breakthrough bleeding, restart immediately after the 4 day break and continue taking the pill

Important information: If you miss a pill, follow the [missed pill guidance](#) and remember pills may not work if you have gut problems (diarrhoea, vomiting)

For more information: [click here](#)

Combined Hormonal Patch (Evra®)

How to take: Apply one patch weekly on the same day each week and start on Days 1-5 of your menstrual cycle. If starting after Day 5, you will need additional precautions (abstaining from sexual intercourse or using condoms) for the first 7 days.

How to apply:

1. Choose clean, dry skin on upper outer arm, buttock, or thigh
2. Remove old patch, warm new patch between palm of your hands, press new patch firmly for 10 seconds
3. Rotate application site to avoid irritation
4. If patch falls off, replace immediately with a new one

Important information: If you miss a patch, you have 48 hours to remember to apply a new patch and remember to follow the full guidance for additional precautions and emergency contraception

Full information leaflet: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/files/pil.13054.pdf>

For more information: [click here](#)

Combined Hormonal Vaginal Ring (NuvaRing®/ SyreniRing®)

How to take: Insert one ring into the vagina and leave it inside the vagina for 3 weeks, remove for the 4th week, reinsert a new ring every 4 weeks.

Start on Days 1-5 of your menstrual cycle. If starting after Day 5, you will need additional precautions (abstaining from sexual intercourse or using condoms) for the first 7 days.

How to insert:

1. After washing and drying hands, remove the ring from the pouch
2. Squeeze the ring between the thumb and index finger and press the sides together
3. Choose a comfortable position such as lying down, squatting, or standing with one leg up
4. Insert the folded ring into the vagina and gently push it further up into the vagina using an index finger
5. If the ring feels uncomfortable, it may not have been pushed into the vagina far enough, use a finger to gently push the ring as far as it can into the vagina
6. Once inserted, leave the ring inside the vagina for 3 weeks in a row

Important information: If you forget to remove or replace the ring, follow the guidance in the leaflet

Full information leaflet: <https://www.nuvaring.com/>

For more information: [click here](#)

Progestogen Only Pill (Desogestrel / Traditional Pills)

How to take: Take one pill daily at the same time each day and start on Days 1-5 of your menstrual cycle. If starting after Day 5, you will need additional precautions (abstaining from sexual intercourse or using condoms) for the first 7 days.

Note: If you are taking desogestrel as part of HRT, take 2 pills daily as one pill will not be enough for womb lining protection

Important information: If you miss a pill, follow the [missed pill guidance](#) and remember pills may not work if you have gut problems (diarrhoea, vomiting)

For more information: [click here](#)

Progestogen Only Pill Drospirenone (Slynd®)

How to take: Take one pill daily at the same time each day for 24 days followed by a 4 day break, repeat the 28 day cycle

Start on Days 1-5 of your menstrual cycle. If starting after Day 5, you will need additional precautions (abstaining from sexual intercourse or using condoms) for the first 7 days.

Note: If you are taking Slynd as part of HRT, do not have a 4 day break and continue taking a pill every day without any breaks

Important information: If you miss a pill, follow the guidance in the leaflet and remember pills may not work if you have gut problems (diarrhoea, vomiting)

Full information leaflet: <https://slynd.com/>

For more information: [click here](#)

Progestogen Injection (Depo-Provera®)

How to take: Attend the clinic for an intra-muscular injection every 12 weeks for Depo-Provera. Have the first injection on Days 1-5 of your menstrual cycle. If starting after Day 5, you will need additional precautions (abstaining from sexual intercourse or using condoms) for the first 7 days.

Important information: If you forget or are late in attending for the next injection, follow the guidance in the leaflet or speak with your prescriber about what to do.

Full Information leaflet: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/files/pil.6721.pdf>

For more information: [click here](#)

Progestogen Injection (Sayana Press®)

How to take: Self inject Sayana Press into the skin as instructed (subcutaneous injection) every 13 weeks.

Start on Days 1-5 of your menstrual cycle. If starting after Day 5, you will need additional precautions (abstaining from sexual intercourse or using condoms) for the first 7 days.

Important information: If you forget or are late with the next injection, follow the guidance in the leaflet or speak with your prescriber about what to do.

Full Information leaflet: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/files/pil.3148.pdf>

For more information: [click here](#)

Progestogen Subdermal Implant (Nexplanon)

How to take: Attend the clinic for insertion of the contraceptive implant in the upper arm under the skin.

Insert on Days 1-5 of your menstrual cycle. If starting after Day 5, you will need additional precautions (abstaining from sexual intercourse or using condoms) for the first 7 days.

Important information: Check that you can feel your implant in your arm 3 months after insertion and if at any point you cannot feel the implant under the skin, contact your healthcare provider.

Information website: <https://www.nexplanon.com/>

For more information: [click here](#)

Progestogen Intrauterine Device

(Mirena®/ Levosert®/ Benilexa®/ Kyleena®/ Jaydess®)

How to take: Attend the clinic for insertion of the intrauterine device with a trained healthcare professional.

The device can be inserted on Days 1-5 of your menstrual cycle or after Day 5 if abstaining from sexual intercourse or using alternative reliable contraception since your last menstrual period. If starting after Day 5, you will need additional precautions (abstaining from sexual intercourse or using condoms) for the first 7 days.

Important information: Check with your provider about pain relief, risks with the procedure and what symptoms you need to look for in the first 3 months.

Mirena information website: <https://www.mirena.co.uk/>

For more information: [click here](#)

Copper Intrauterine Device

How to take: Attend the clinic for insertion of the intrauterine device with a trained healthcare professional

The device can be inserted on Days 1-5 of your menstrual cycle or after Day 5 if abstaining from sexual intercourse or using alternative reliable contraception since your last menstrual period

The device will be effective right away for contraception

Note: If using the copper intrauterine device as emergency contraception, it can be inserted up to 5 days after expected ovulation or unprotected sexual intercourse

Important information: Check with your provider about pain relief, risks with the procedure and what symptoms you need to look for in the first 3 months

For more information: [click here](#)

Condoms

How to use: Use a new condom for each time sexual intercourse takes place and follow the instructions on the condom packet

Male condoms:

1. Make sure the penis is fully erect before using a male condom
2. Open the packet carefully so you do not damage the condom and do not use your teeth as this could rip the condom
3. Hold the tip of the condom to squeeze out any air
4. Roll the condom all the way down to the base of the penis
5. Keep the condom on the penis until you finish having sex
6. When you've finished, make sure the base of the condom is held while the penis pulls out to stop it coming off the penis
7. Put the condom in the bin, not in the toilet

Female condoms:

1. Open the packet carefully so you do not damage the condom and do not use your teeth as this could rip the condom
2. Hold the inner ring and insert the condom into the vagina
3. Put a finger into the condom and push it as far into the vagina as you can
4. Make sure the outer ring stays outside the vagina
5. During sex, make sure the penis goes inside the condom
6. After sex, twist the outer ring a few times to prevent semen leaking out when you remove the condom
7. Put the condom in the bin, not in the toilet

Important information:

- Check the condom after use for any tears or leakage, and seek emergency contraception if you think that there has been a failure
- Check the use by date has not expired
- Check for a European CE mark or UKCA mark for safety testing

For more information: [click here](#)

Diaphragms

How to use: Insert a correctly sized diaphragm into the vagina as instructed after applying spermicide. Make sure that this is done before sexual intercourse and remains inside the vagina for at least 6 hours after sexual intercourse.

1. Check the diaphragm for holes before using it
2. Apply spermicide to the diaphragm
3. Put the diaphragm in the vagina up to 3 hours before sex, making sure it fits over the cervix
4. Apply spermicide to the diaphragm again every 3 hours until you have sex
5. After sex, leave the diaphragm in for at least 6 hours
6. Remove the diaphragm and wash it with warm soapy water
7. Leave the diaphragm to dry and keep it in a cool, dry place

Important information:

- The diaphragm can be inserted up to 3 hours before sex
- If having sex again before removing the diaphragm, insert more spermicide
- Leave the diaphragm in the vagina for at least 6 hours after sex
- Check the diaphragm regularly for any holes or tears

Caya information website: <https://caya.co.uk/>

Fertility Awareness

- This method requires monitoring of your menstrual cycle and predicting time of ovulation
- Having regular menstrual cycles and not using any hormonal contraception are required to be able to use this method
- Along with monitoring the menstrual cycle, body temperature and cervical mucus can be checked for more accurate awareness of ovulation timing
- Teaching from a qualified fertility awareness teacher is recommended
- Monitoring is required for at least 3 months to identify when expected ovulation is likely to occur in future cycles
- Do not rely on this method alone if you are unsure when ovulation is likely to occur, use barriers such as condoms or abstain from sexual intercourse

Important information:

- If unwell or any changes with your health, do not rely on this method
- This method cannot be used together with hormonal contraceptives
- Those with irregular cycles are not suitable for this method
- For any unprotected sex during fertile days, seek advice from a healthcare professional about emergency contraception

For more information: [click here](#)

Withdrawal Method

- This method means withdrawal (pulling out) before male ejaculation during sexual intercourse
- It is not considered a reliable form of contraception and the risk of failure is 20% (1 in 5)

For more information: [click here](#)