Possible Warning Signs

- Pain in the abdomen or chest
- Severe headaches
- Sudden shortness of breath or spitting up blood
- Unusual swelling or pain in the leg or arm
- Changes in the frequency, severity, or associated symptoms of headaches, such as changes in vision.
- Worsening depression
- Yellowing of the skin or eyes
- A new lump in your breast
- Unusually heavy bleeding from your vagina

How To Start The Pill

Your HCP will suggest one of three ways to begin taking the pill.

Quick Start: Take our first pill the day you receive your prescription. This is the preferred method. Use a back-up method* for 7 days. You will not get your period until you finish taking the active pills.

First-Day Start: Take your first pill on the first day of your next period.

Sunday Start: Take your first pill on the first Sunday, during your period. Use the back-up method* for 7 days.

*back-up method refers to an alternative method of birth control.

Schedule an appointment @ Beu Health Center by calling:

(309) 298-1888

All information was adapted from: [www.plannedparenthood.org/health-topics/birthcontrol/the-pill.htm](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-topics/birthcontrol/the-pill.htm) and Hatcher, R.A., et al (2004). *Contraceptive Technology* (18th revised edition), Ardent Media, inc.
The pill is the common name for oral contraception (OC). The pill is made of the hormones like those commonly made by a woman’s ovaries. The pill requires a medical evaluation and prescription by a medical health care professional. The pill can prevent pregnancy.

Oral contraceptives usually work by preventing a woman’s ovaries from releasing eggs (ovulation). They also thicken cervical mucus, which keeps sperm from joining with an egg.

Taking the pill daily maintains the level of hormones that is needed to prevent pregnancy.

Most healthy women can take the pill. You should not take the pill if you have an abnormal growth or cancer of the breast or think you might be pregnant. You should not take the pill if you:

- Are 35 or older and smoke cigarettes
- Have uncontrolled high blood pressure
- Have controlled high blood pressure and smoke cigarettes
- Have a history of blood clots or vein inflammation
- Have a history of heart valve problems
- Have had an abnormal growth or cancer of the uterus
- Have had a severe liver disease or growths of the liver
- Have certain conditions associated with diabetes
- Have certain inherited blood clotting disorders
- Have a history of heart attack or stroke
- Have a history of migraine headaches with aura
- Need prolonged bed rest after major surgery

As with all drugs, there may be some undesirable side effects for some women taking the pill. Side effects that usually clear up after 2 or 3 months include: bleeding between periods, breast tenderness, headache and nausea—rarely vomiting.

If you continue to experience side effects after 3 months, your health care provider will adjust your prescription. Side effects that many not go away include: depression or changes in sexual desire.

Serious problems do not occur very often. In general, using the pill is much safer than pregnancy and childbirth. Pill users have a slightly greater chance of certain major disorders than nonusers. This risk is increased by being age 35 or older, smoking and/or having conditions associated with heart attack, diabetes, high blood pressure, or high cholesterol and certain inherited conditions that increase the risk of blood clotting. The most serious complications of OCs is having a blood clot in the legs, lungs, heart or brain. Serious problems associated with the pill usually have warning signs. There is a list of these signs on the reverse side. If any of the following symptoms develop report them to your Beu health care provider as soon as possible.