

**UYAZI?** *Do you know?*  
There is a Pill without the usual  
hormonal Ups and Downs!



Bayer HealthCare  
Bayer Schering Pharma



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If you want freedom  
like never before  
read on!



## What are birth control pills?

Birth control pills are prescription medications that can be used to prevent pregnancy. Birth control pills containing two female sex hormones, estrogen and progesterone, are called combination birth control pills or simply put, “the Pill”.

### Some other names for birth control pills are:

- Combined oral contraceptives (COCs)
- Oral contraceptives (OCs)
- The Pill

## How does the Pill work?

Basically, the Pill inhibits the monthly release of an egg by the ovaries. It changes the mucus produced by the cervix, which slows the movement of the sperm through the mucus and through the uterus (womb).

## How effective are birth control pills?

Combination birth control pills are >99% effective in preventing pregnancy when taken as directed.

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### **Is it just me, or do other women also feel terrible nearly a week before, and then through their period?**

Women around the world all share the following physical and emotional symptoms, to a greater or lesser extent: headaches, bloating, tender breasts, mood swings, irritability, tension or anxiety and even break-outs of pimples or acne.<sup>1,2</sup>

### **Acne is quite a problem for me – is it linked to my hormone levels?**

It could well be! The good news is that there is a contraceptive pill that helps improve the skin condition of women with moderate acne!<sup>3</sup> But first, read on to find out more!

### **Are you saying that there is a Pill that offers effective contraception and that could help to clear up my skin?**

That's right! So it effectively stops you from falling pregnant if taken correctly, and could help your skin to look better!

### **What about mood swings? I get so irritated with my boyfriend just before my period, that we nearly break up once a month!**

There is a Pill that takes the 'swing' out of 'mood swing'! You see, hormonal fluctuations cause those ups and downs you are experiencing.<sup>4,5</sup> If your hormone levels are evened out by means of a Pill such as the one we're talking about, it makes sense that your moods also even out, right?<sup>4,5</sup>

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**That certainly makes sense! Tell me, does this Pill do anything for bloating? I feel so 'fat' before my period, even though I'm not overweight.**

One of the hormones in this particular Pill is called Drospirenone, or DRSP for short. DRSP helps to counteract the effects of estrogen-induced water retention and weight gain, which you describe as bloating.<sup>6,7</sup>

**Some of my friends seem to experience tender breasts around that time of the month - would this new Pill alleviate that?**

It may well do! Breast tenderness is also estrogen induced, as with the water retention you have.<sup>6</sup> So DRSP will also work against this physical symptom of the menstrual cycle.<sup>6</sup>

**My problem is that I'm sick and tired of all the physical, emotional and hormonal ups and downs I experience ... I've been on a Pill before. What's so different about this one?**

Not only has this Pill been received with huge satisfaction around the world, but the dosing regimen of this Pill is in line with the latest research done in this field. You see, whereas other conventional Pills on the market have 21 active pills and 7 'sugar pills' or placebos. This Pill has a 24/4 dosing regimen, meaning that you would be taking 24 active pills and only 4 placebo pills every cycle.<sup>6</sup>



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### **What is the benefit of this new dosing regimen?**

It holds untold benefits for the person who suffers with those symptoms as a result of hormonal fluctuations. You'd experience fewer hormone withdrawal symptoms, menstrual and premenstrual symptoms like pelvic pain, headaches, bloating, breast tenderness, mood swings and irritability than you would, on a Pill with a 21/7 dosing regimen.<sup>4,5,6</sup>

### **That sounds AWESOME! But would it still give me effective contraception protection?**

Yes. This new 24/4 Pill offers highly effective oral contraception with excellent cycle control.<sup>4,6</sup> It is also the only Pill in South Africa which has been registered for three indications:<sup>8</sup>

- Oral contraception
- Treatment of moderate acne in women wanting to use an oral contraceptive
- Treatment of symptoms of premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) in women wanting to use an oral contraceptive. PMDD is the most severe form of premenstrual syndrome (PMS).

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### **I'm on another Pill currently but I'd love to switch. Could I?**

Yes! Chat to your doctor about switching, and ask the doctor about the new 24/4 drospirenone Pill that is available in South Africa.



### **Does the Pill protect me against HIV-AIDS or other sexually-transmitted infections?**

The Pill ... any contraceptive Pill ... offers no protection whatsoever from HIV-AIDS or any sexually-transmitted infections (STIs). Always use a condom unless you are in a faithful, committed relationship with someone you know you can trust, and you are both sure you are not carrying an STI.



### **Is it possible to still get pregnant while taking the Pill?**

The chance of becoming pregnant with birth control pills increases with incorrect use (i.e., missing pills). The greatest risks for pregnancy occur when a pack is started late or when pills are missed at the beginning or very end of the pack.



### **Is there anything else I might do to make the Pill less effective?**

Certain drugs may interact with birth control pills to make them less effective in preventing pregnancy or cause an increase in breakthrough bleeding between menstrual periods.

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You should inform your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking or have recently taken any other drugs or herbal products, even those without a prescription. You should also tell any other doctor or dentist who prescribes another drug (or the dispensing pharmacist) that you are taking the Pill. They can tell you if you need to use another method of contraception in addition to the Pill and if so, for how long. The Pill may also interfere with the effectiveness of other drugs.



### **How does the Pill affect my periods?**

When using the Pill to prevent pregnancy, birth control pill users, in general, lose less menstrual blood and have more regular cycles. There may also be a decrease in painful menstruation cramps.



### **Will the Pill treat my acne?**

Acne can improve with the use of birth control pills. However, the Pill can be a cause of acne and other side effects in some women. Androgen is a male sex hormone that circulates naturally within the female body. It can cause glands in the skin to over-produce oil. The 24/4 drospirenone containing Pill works by lowering androgen levels in the body and by blocking the effects of androgens at the glands. A reduction in the number of acne breakouts is associated with this treatment.



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### Do I need to take a break from the Pill?

There is no need to stop taking birth control pills for a rest period. Talk to your doctor or healthcare professional if you have any questions or concerns.

### Can I smoke while on the Pill?

Women are advised not to smoke while using birth control pills. Cigarette smoking increases the risk of serious adverse effects on the heart and blood vessels. This risk increases with age and becomes significant in hormonal contraceptive users older than 35 years of age.

### What should I know about my period while taking the Pill?

Your period will usually occur during the last four days of your pill pack, while you are taking the inactive pills. It is normal to still be menstruating when starting your next pack of pills.

### What happens if I experience bleeding or spotting between periods?

You should continue taking the Pill even if you have bleeding or spotting between monthly periods. This type of bleeding is more common in the first three months of taking birth control pills and will usually go away. If it does not, contact your doctor or clinic.

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*Missed pills can also cause some spotting or light bleeding, even if you make up the missed pills.*



### **What happens if I have nausea while taking the Pill?**

Many women may feel sick to their stomach (nausea) during the first three months on the Pill. You should not skip pills even if you feel sick. The problem will usually go away. If it does not, check with your doctor or clinic.



### **What else should I tell my doctor or pharmacist before starting the Pill?**

Not everyone can use the combined Pill, so your doctor will need to ask you about your own and your family's medical history. Do mention any illness or operations you have had. Some of the conditions which may mean you should not use the combined Pill are:

- You think you might already be pregnant
- You are very overweight
- You take certain medicines
- You have severe migraines

You should also inform your doctor about a family history of blood clots, heart attacks, or strokes.

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### **Are there any side effects associated with taking the Pill?**

The following side effects have been observed in studies of women taking the Pill which may or may not be drug related. Most side effects that occur when using the birth control pill are not serious.

#### **The most common side effects of birth control pills are:**

Nausea, vomiting, bleeding or spotting between menstrual periods, breast pain, acne, itching, migraine, dizziness, emotional lability (sudden changes in emotional state without a reason), dysmenorrhoea (painful menstrual cramps), headache, vaginal yeast infection, depression, back pain, abdominal pain, nervousness and rash.

#### **Other side effects of birth control pills can occur such as:**

Gastrointestinal symptoms (abdominal cramps and bloating), pigmentation of the skin (particularly on the face), change in appetite, change in libido (sex drive), hair loss, change in weight (increase or decrease), swelling, breast changes (tenderness, enlargement, discharge).

***Remember, this is not a complete list of side effects.  
If you experience any unexpected effects while taking  
the Pill, you should contact your doctor or pharmacist.  
Read the package insert for more information.***



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### Where can I get more information?

Speak to your medical practitioner, your pharmacist, or visit this website for more information:

[www.uyazi.co.za](http://www.uyazi.co.za)



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