

MISSED ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE ADVICE



Care
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LATE PILLS

The pill should be taken at the same time every day. If a pill is taken late, it will continue to provide the contraceptive effect if it is taken between 24 and 48 hours since the previous pill was taken. Two pills can be taken on the same day.

For instance: An individual takes their daily pill at 8am. They have taken their 8am Monday pill, but forget to take their 8am Tuesday pill. They can take the Tuesday pill any time until 8am Wednesday and the contraceptive protection will continue to be effective. They should take the Wednesday pill at their usual time of 8am on Wednesday.

MISSED PILLS

A pill is considered missed if it has been more than 48 since the previous pill was taken. If a pill is missed, take the pill that is most recently due immediately and continue to take the pill at the usual time. This may mean taking 2 pills in one day. Use condoms for 7 days.

For instance: An individual takes their daily pill at 8am. They have taken their 8am Monday pill, but they forgot their 8am Tuesday pill and it is now after 8am Wednesday. They are in the middle of their hormonal pill cycle. They should take both the Tuesday and Wednesday pill immediately and to use condoms for the next 7 days.

EARLY CYCLE MISSED PILL (less than 7 pills TAKEN since last hormone free break)

A pill is considered an early cycle missed pill if the pill is missed within the first 7 days of hormone pills following a hormone free break. In this instance emergency contraception should be considered if there has been unprotected intercourse in the previous 5 days.

- If Levonorgestrel emergency contraception is used (preferable) continue taking the contraceptive pills as usual.
- If Ulipristal acetate emergency contraception is used, stop using the contraceptive pill for 5 days. The contraceptive pill reduces the efficacy of ulipristal acetate. Restart the contraceptive pill with an active pill 5 days after ulipristal acetate. Use condoms for 12 days (i.e. 5 days without the contraceptive pill +7 days of contraceptive pill use).

For instance: An individual has missed a pill in the first 7 days after their hormone free break. They had vaginal intercourse without a condom 2 days ago. They should continue to take the pill, take levonorgestrel emergency contraception, and use condoms for 7 days as an additional precaution. The pill will be effective contraception again after 7 consecutive days of taking the hormone pills.

LATE CYCLE MISSED PILL (less than 7 pills LEFT before next hormone free break)

If the pill is missed in the 7 days before the next hormone free break, skip the inactive pills and continue hormone pills without a break.

For instance: An individual misses a pill in the 7 days before their hormone free break. They should continue to take the pills in this pack and skip the hormone free break (inactive pills). They should commence the new pack of hormone pills the day following the final day of the previous pack's active pills. They should also use condoms for the 7 days following the missed pill as a precaution. It is most likely that they will not have a withdrawal bleed.

MORE THAN 4 PILLS MISSED

If more than 4 pills are missed, the individual should consider taking the levonorgestrel emergency contraception pill and then restart the pill again. The contraceptive pill will become effective contraception again after taking 7 consecutive days of contraceptive pill use.

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**Is this considered a
MISSED PILL?**
(More than 48 hours since the last pill
was taken?)

NO – This is a LATE PILL
(between 24 and 48 hours since
the last pill was taken)

- Take the pill most recently
due now.
- Carry on with the rest of
the pack as per usual.

YES

- Take the pill most recently due now.
- This may mean 2 pills in one day.
- Discard any other missed pills and
use condoms for 7 days.

**They have taken less
than 7 pills since last
inactive pill break.**

- Consider *LNG-EC
if unprotected sex has
occurred in the past 5
days.

**There are less than 7
pills left in the pack
before next inactive
pill break.**

- Skip inactive pills.
- Continue with
active pills in next
pack.

Rules unchanged for up to 4 missed pills
*If using ulipristal acetate, cannot restart pill for 5/7