

Initiation of the Drospirenone 4mg Progestogen only Pill

Each 28-day cycle of the 4 mg drospirenone (DRSP) progestogen only pill (POP) consists of administration of one active tablet for 24 consecutive days followed by the administration of one inert tablet for 4 consecutive days.

Traditional initiation

The DRSP 4mg POP is immediately effective if:

- started on day 1 to 5 of a regular menstrual cycle*
- started less than 21 days postpartum
- started within 5 days of an abortion, miscarriage or treated ectopic pregnancy.

*This recommendation is based on the Faculty of Sexual & Reproductive Healthcare guidance for all progestogen-only methods. ⁽¹⁾

Quick Start

The DRSP 4mg POP can be initiated using Quick Start at any stage of the menstrual cycle starting with an active hormone pill with the additional use of condoms or abstinence for the first 7 days of active pill taking. If pregnancy cannot be excluded, a pregnancy test is recommended 4 weeks after initiation.

Switching to DRSP 4mg POP from other contraceptive methods

Table 1 provides advice on switching from other methods of contraception.

Table 1. Initiating or switching to the DRSP 4mg POP from another contraceptive method			
Situation		Begin drospirenone 4mg	Effective
No contraception or barrier		Day 1 to 5 of normal cycle	Immediately
		Any other time ¹	In 7 days
Postpartum Includes stillbirths and abortions >24 weeks		≤21 days post delivery	Immediately
		>21 days post-delivery ¹	In 7 days
Post abortion, miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy		Within 5 days of a surgical abortion, miscarriage or treated ectopic pregnancy, or within 5 days of taking mifepristone (Step 1 of medical abortion)	Immediately
		Any other time ¹	In 7 days
LNG IUD ^{1,2}		Any time	In 7 days
Cu-IUD ^{1,2}		Day 1 to 5 of cycle	Immediately
		Other times	In 7 days
Etonogestrel implant	In date	Any time	Immediately
	expired	Any time ¹	In 7 days
DMPA injection	In date	Any time	Immediately
	>14 weeks since last injection	Any time ¹	In 7 days

Combined pill or vaginal ring	If 7 or more consecutive days of active pill or ring use.	Immediately
	Start DRSP pill the next day	
	Any other time	In 7 days
Traditional Progestogen only pills ³	Any time ¹	In 7 days
Levonorgestrel emergency contraception	Straight away ⁴	In 7 days
Ulipristal emergency contraception	At least 5 days later ⁴	In 7 days

1. Consider existing pregnancy, e.g., if current method expired. If pregnancy not excluded perform pregnancy test 3 weeks after last unprotected sexual intercourse

2. There is a risk of pregnancy from previous intercourse if an IUD is removed within 7 days of unprotected sex. Retain IUD for 7 days unless there has been no unprotected sex in the previous 7 days

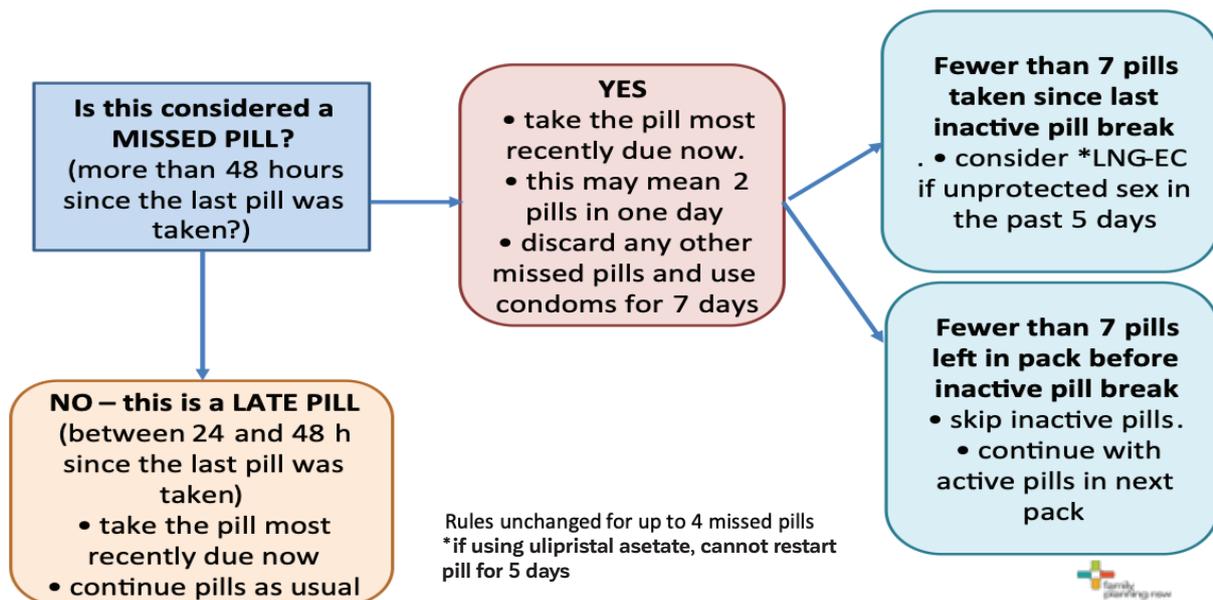
3. Norethisterone 350mcg and levonorgestrel 30 mcg

4. Pregnancy test recommended 4 weeks after initiation

Missed pill advice

A study which involved four fixed scheduled delayed intakes of 24 hours each on day 3, 6, 11 and 22 of the 24 active pills over 2 cycles followed by a double dose the following day found that inhibition of ovulation was maintained.⁽²⁾ As a result the missed pill advice is the same as for the combined oral contraceptive pills.⁽³⁾

Managing missed DRSP 4mg POPs



References

1. Progestogen-only Pills: Faculty of Sexual & Reproductive Healthcare. Clinical Effectiveness Unit; 2019 [updated January 2016; cited 2019 12 September]. Available from: <https://www.fsrh.org/standards-and-guidance//documents/cec-ceu-guidance-pop-mar-2015/>.
2. Duijkers IJM, Heger-Mahn D, Drouin D, Colli E, Skouby S. Maintenance of ovulation inhibition with a new progestogen-only pill containing drospirenone after scheduled 24-h delays in pill intake. *Contraception*. 2016;93(4):303-9.
3. eTG. *Contraception* [published 2020 Dec]. In: eTG complete [digital]. Melbourne: Therapeutic Guidelines Limited; [cited 2021 29 October]. Available from: <https://www.tg.org.au>.



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shq.org.au



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