

# How to use the Desogestrel progesterone only pill

## Information for patients

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Take the first pill on the day you take misoprostol - unless advised differently by your doctor or nurse. You will be protected from pregnancy immediately. If you delay starting your pill for more than 5 days following your procedure you must also use condoms or abstain from sex for 2 days before you are protected from pregnancy.

If you do not commence your pill as above procedure and have unprotected sex, you may require emergency contraception. Please contact your GP, local pharmacy or Chalmers Sexual Health Centre for advice. Tel: 0131 536 1070.

Most women experience a change in their periods while taking the progesterone only pill. After a year of use, 5 out of 10 women will stop having periods, or have very little bleeding. This is safe and an expected side effect. 4 out of 10 women will experience some irregular bleeding, although this may be infrequent. This is also harmless although some women find the unpredictable nature of the bleeding unacceptable.

Take one pill every day for as long as contraception is required, even on days when you are bleeding.

After completing one packet start on the next packet the very next day. **Do not take a break.** Do not stop taking your pills without consulting the clinic or your doctor.

Try to take the pill at the same time each day. If it is taken more than 12 hours late, it will stop working.

The progesterone only pill we supply is called Desogestrel. This is more effective than other types of progesterone only pill. When you get more from your GP, make sure to check it is the same type.

### Missed pills

If you **forget to take one or more pills** or are **late starting a new packet**, you are not protected against pregnancy. You should take the most recently missed pill and continue with your packet of pills as usual, but you **must use an additional method of contraception** such as condoms for the next 2 days. Otherwise, you may need emergency contraception.

### If you are sick

If you **vomit within two hours of taking your pill** or **develop severe diarrhoea**, continue to take your pills but use other contraceptive precautions (condoms) for 2 days once your symptoms have stopped. If, on any occasion, your bleeding pattern changes, following an attack of diarrhoea or vomiting, or after you have forgotten a pill, you should get a pregnancy test to rule out the possibility of pregnancy.

### Other medicines

Certain **medicines can reduce the effectiveness of the pill** including the herbal remedy St John's Wort. When other medicines are prescribed for you, check with your GP whether or not it will be necessary to use condoms.

## **Safer sex**

The pill does not protect you from sexually transmitted infection. Use condoms with new partners and test regularly.

## **If you have any problems, do not hesitate to contact us.**

Chalmers Centre  
2A Chalmers Street  
Edinburgh  
EH3 9ES  
Tel 0131 536 1070

Gynaecology Outpatients  
OPD 3  
St John's Hospital  
Livingston  
Tel: 01506 523000

