

Mini pill

Also known as the progestogen-only contraceptive pill.

What is the mini pill?

The mini pill is a progestogen-only oral contraceptive pill (POP) which is taken at the same time every day to prevent pregnancy.

Progestogen is similar to the hormone produced by the ovaries in the female body.

In Australia the mini pill is sold as Microlut[®], Locilan[®] and Noriday[®].

How does the mini pill work?

The mini pill works by:

- thickening the mucus of the cervix so that sperm cannot enter the uterus (womb), or
- affecting ovulation (egg release from the ovary) in some users.

When you take the mini pill for the first time or after a break, it can take up to three days to start working.

Speak with a doctor, nurse or pharmacist about the best way to get started.

How well does it work?

- Taken correctly, the mini pill can be 99.5% effective at preventing pregnancy.
- If you miss a pill, vomit within two hours of taking a pill, are more than three hours late in taking the pill and have severe diarrhoea or take certain medications, this can reduce to 93% effective.

Is the mini pill right for me?

The mini pill might not be right for you if you:

- find taking a tablet at the same time each day difficult
- have been treated for breast cancer
- have severe liver disease, or
- are taking certain types of medication might stop the mini pill from working (see your doctor or pharmacist).

Where can I get the mini pill?

Starting the mini pill for the first time requires an assessment by a doctor.

They will explain how to use the mini pill and give you a prescription.

The cost of the mini pill is largely dependent on whether you have a Concession and/or Medicare card.

The mini pill is available from any pharmacy with a prescription (script).

Advantages

- Contains a very low dose of hormones.
- Reversible, with a rapid return to usual fertility once stopped.
- Starts working quickly.
- A choice if you can't take the hormone oestrogen.
- You can take it whilst breast feeding and can start immediately after having a baby.

Possible side effects

Side effects are uncommon but may include:

- changes in bleeding patterns including periods stopping completely and irregular periods
- ovarian cysts – usually there are no symptoms and these do not require treatment
- headaches
- breast tenderness
- changes to your skin, and
- mood changes.

The mini pill has not been shown to cause weight gain.

How do I take the mini pill?

You need to take the mini pill at the same time every day.

The pack contains 28 hormone pills. There are no sugar pills (non-hormone pills).

We recommend you set a reminder on your phone or calendar to help you remember to take the mini pill.

What could stop the mini pill from working?

The mini pill might not work if you:

- take it more than three hours late
- have had severe diarrhoea
- vomit within two hours of taking it
- are taking certain medications and natural remedies (check with your doctor).

What do I do if I miss a mini pill?

1. Take the missed pill as soon as you notice (this may mean you may be taking two pills on the same day).
2. Use condoms for the next three days.
3. Continue to take your pills as normal.

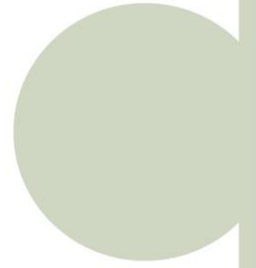
What else do I need to know?

If you have had unprotected sex since you missed your pill, you may need to take emergency contraception.

If you do get pregnant while on the mini pill, stop taking it. It is safe to continue with the pregnancy.

For more information, support & advice, visit www.fpt.asn.au.

Family Planning Tasmania acknowledges the contribution of FPV and FPNSW in the development of this fact sheet.



Disclaimer: This content is provided for general information and education purposes only and does not take into account individual circumstances. It is not to be relied on in substitution for specific advice from a medical professional and Family Planning Tasmania does not accept responsibility for such use. Family Planning Tasmania has taken every effort to ensure that the information is up to date and accurate, however information and knowledge is subject to change. Family Planning Tasmania advises that you always consult a medical professional for individual advice.