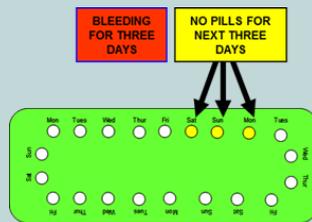


Extended use of the combined oral contraceptive pill

Patient Instructions

Evidence for extended use

FRSH has issued guidance for the combined oral contraceptive pill that extended use is a reasonable approach to taking the combined oral contraception. It is noted, however, that this is 'off licence' use.



What is extended pill taking?

Taking the pill continuously without any breaks between strips. If bleeding occurs at any point for 3 continuous days (bleeding requiring use of a pad or tampon), then stop the pill for 3-4 consecutive days. And then re-start irrespective of whether the bleeding has stopped. This discourages further irregular bleeding. Continue in this way and keep a record of any bleeding.

When to start

Start the pill on day 1-5 of your cycle. The pill can be started on any other day in the cycle if there is no risk of pregnancy, however in this circumstance you need to use another form of protection for the first 7 days. If you are already on a COC, patch, or vaginal ring method, implant, injection or desogestrel-only POP, and transferring directly over to the extended pill use, you do not need added precautions. If you are switching from IUD/S or any other POP you need to use added precautions for 7 days.

How to do extended pill taking

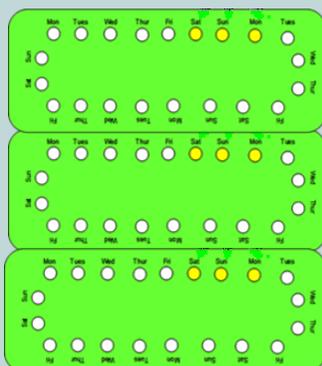
You need to take the pill each day for at least the first 21 days without any breaks until bleeding occurs for 3-4 continuous days (don't worry if this doesn't happen to you, it doesn't occur with everyone). Stop taking the pill for 3-4 days, even if the bleeding stops. Then resume taking the pill every day, and when the pack is finished go straight on to the next pack.

Tricycling use of the combined oral contraceptive pill

Patient Instructions

Evidence for tailored use

FRSH has issued guidance supporting taking the combined oral contraceptive pill in the tricycling manner. It is noted, however, that this is 'off licence' use.



What is tricycling pill taking?

Taking the pill continuously without any breaks between strips for three strips (9 weeks). You then take a break for 7 consecutive days during which time a bleed will occur. Continue in this way and keep a record of bleeding.

When to start

Start the pill on day 1-5 of your cycle. The pill can be started on any other day in the cycle if there is no risk of pregnancy, however in this circumstance you need to use another form of protection for the first 7 days. If you are already on a COC, patch, or vaginal ring method, implant, injection or desogestrel-only POP, and transferring directly over to the extended pill use, you do not need added precautions. If you are switching from IUD/S or any other POP you need to use added precautions for 7 days.

How to do tricycling pill taking

You need to take the pill each day without any breaks for at least the first 21 days. Keep on taking the pill until you have taken three strips continuously (9 weeks). Then stop for 7 days. Continue taking the pill in this manner (3 strips continuously followed by 7 days off).