



## Birth Control Instructions

### Birth Control Pills

- Typically, you will be asked to start your pills on the Sunday after a period starts (whether or not you are still bleeding). If your period begins on a Sunday, begin taking your pills that day.
- Take one pill every day. Your goal is to take them around the same time every day. Morning or evening are fine but be consistent. If you have trouble with nausea try to take them at night before bed or with food.
- You must use a back up method of contraception for the first month.
- Your period will typically show up in the beginning of the “dummy” or placebo pills at the end of your pack.
- If you miss a pill – take it as soon as you remember. Also remember to take your scheduled pill for that day.
- If you miss a second pill in the cycle – take it as soon as you remember but keep in mind you would not be protected and should use a back up for the remainder of the cycle.
- If you miss a third time – you need to throw your pill pack away. Wait for your cycle to start and begin again on Sunday. If you find you are consistently missing pills please call to discuss other contraceptive options.

### Nuva Ring

- If you have chosen the Nuva Ring as your method you will want to wait until around the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> day as you are nearing the end of your cycle to insert your ring.
- The ring will stay in place for 21 days. Mark this day on your calendar when you insert your ring.
- Leave the ring out for a full 7 days. You will typically start your cycle a day or two after your ring is removed.
- If you remove your ring for any reason (e.g. intercourse) you have up to three hours to replace it.
- If your ring falls out and you do not know the amount of time call the office for instructions.

### Ortho Evra (The patch)

- You will start your patch on the Friday after your period starts.
- Change your patch each week on the same day for three weeks in a row.
- On the last week – leave your patch off for a full 7 days. You will typically start your cycle a couple days after you remove your last patch.
- If your patch falls off try to re-stick it. If it will not stick replace the patch with a new one. If you are less than half way through the week use this as your new change day. If you are more than half way through the week replace your patch on your normal day.

Note: It is fairly common to have much lighter and shorter cycles on the pill. Some pills are designed with only four “dummy” or placebo pills at the end. It is very common to only have a light period for a day or two or even none at all with these pills. If you are taking them correctly and this happens it is OK.

If you are on an extended cycle type of birth control keep in mind that in the beginning break through bleeding or spotting is fairly common. This should get better the longer you are on your pill.

Always remember that hormonal methods of birth control do not protect against sexually transmitted diseases. You are the only one ultimately responsible for your health and make sure you are protected.

### Serious Side Effects

If you notice any of the following, call the office immediately:

- Sharp pain in your chest or shortness of breath
- Pain in the calf of your leg
- Sudden headache, vomiting, dizziness or fainting
- Disturbances in vision or speech, weakness or numbness in your extremities
- Severe abdominal pain
- Severe depression