

Missed a pill? Here's what to do...

This information relates to the **combined pill only** (it does not cover the progesterone only pill, otherwise known as the mini pill) and should be read in conjunction with the instructions in your pill packet. Please consult your doctor if you are unsure about anything.

IF YOU ARE LESS THAN 12 HOURS LATE TAKING A PILL...

Take the missed pill immediately and the rest of your pills at the usual time.

IF YOU ARE MORE THAN 12 HOURS LATE TAKING A PILL...

For the 28 day combined pill:

Take the forgotten pill immediately and the rest at the usual time, using condoms for the next 7 days. If you have less than seven hormonal pills left in your packet, do not take the 'sugar' pills (the pills without hormones); go straight onto the hormonal pills in a new packet. Your period will be delayed until the next set of sugar pills.

For the 21 day combined pill:

Take the forgotten pill immediately and the rest at the usual time, using condoms for the next 7 days. If you have less than seven hormonal pills left in your 21 day packet, start a new packet (on the corresponding day) without taking a break. Your period will be delayed until the next break.



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WHEN DO I NEED TO USE AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF CONTRACEPTION WHILST ON THE PILL?

An alternative method of contraception, such as a condom, must be used to protect you from unplanned pregnancy for 7 days if you:

- are over 12 hours late in taking a pill;
- have been vomiting and have diarrhoea; and/or
- are taking a course of antibiotics or some other form of medication or natural therapy, which may alter the pill's effectiveness (check with your doctor).

WHAT ABOUT THE MORNING AFTER PILL?

If any of the three points above apply and you have had unprotected sex, you should seek emergency contraception within 72 hours of unprotected sex in order to avoid unplanned pregnancy.

Also known as the "morning after pill", emergency contraception is available over the counter from pharmacies. It is most effective if taken within 24 hours of unprotected sex (95% effective), and its effectiveness is reduced to 58% if left 48-72 hours after intercourse.

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