

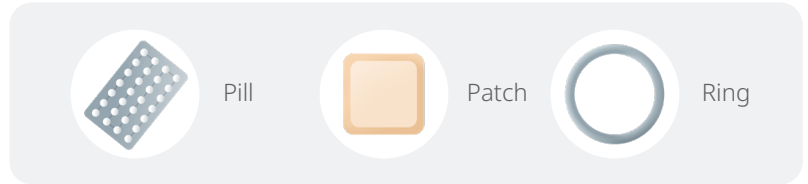


CONTRACEPTION SIDE EFFECTS AND PATIENT EDUCATION



Combined hormonal contraceptives (COCs)

COCs contain estrogen and progestin. Side effects may vary based on the type and dose of each component.



Common, benign side effects

- Breakthrough bleeding
- Nausea
- Headaches
- Abdominal cramping
- Breast tenderness
- Vaginal dryness
- Decreased libido
- Mood changes

Serious adverse effects

- Hypertension
- Blood clots (VTE, stroke)
- Cardiovascular events
- Liver disorders
- Glucose dysregulation in clients with history of diabetes

Contraindications

- Uncontrolled hypertension
- Migraine with aura
- Ischemic heart disease
- History of blood clots or coagulation disorders
- Known liver disease
- Smokers > 35 years old
- Endometrial or breast cancer

WARNING SIGNS

- A** Abdomen: severe pain may indicate liver tumor or ectopic pregnancy
- C** Chest: severe pain and SOB may indicate MI or PE
- H** Head: sudden severe headache may indicate stroke
- E** Eye: blurriness or loss of vision may indicate blood clot in eye
- S** Sudden pain or swelling in leg: may indicate VTE

Client education

- Review ACHES and how to report concerning symptoms
- Encourage reporting of benign side effects as well, may be improved by change of formulation

Progestin-only contraceptives

Progestin-only contraceptives do not contain estrogen. For this reason, they have fewer side effects than COCs and may be safe for individuals who are unable to take estrogen.



Common, benign side effects

- Irregular bleeding
- Increased acne

Contraindications

- Known or suspected pregnancy
- Unexplained vaginal bleeding
- Breast cancer

Client education

- Irregular bleeding often improves after first 6 months of use.
- Report if persistent/bothersome

Medication interactions

COCs and the minipill have many drug-drug interactions. Take a thorough medication history to identify interactions that may decrease contraceptive efficacy.

General education: hormonal contraceptives

- Contraceptive efficacy depends upon correct and consistent use. Explain the mechanism of action, instructions for use, and what to do if the client misses a dose. Validate understanding through teach back.
- Hormonal contraceptive methods do not provide protection against HIV and other STIs. Encourage barrier method use for STI prevention.