

COMBINED ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE



Combined oral contraception is a daily pill that contains low doses of estrogen and progestin to prevent pregnancy. The method is a short-term reversible contraceptive option. Effectiveness depends on user's adherence.

MECHANISM OF ACTION

Oral contraceptives prevent fertilization. The combination of estrogen and progestin prevents ovulation by providing negative feedback to the hypothalamic-pituitary gland and thickening the cervical mucus, which stops sperm from entering the uterus. It is possible that combined oral contraception might alter the endometrium, but evidence is insufficient to show implantation is prevented by oral contraceptive use. Combined oral contraception does not disrupt an existing pregnancy.

METHOD EFFECTIVENESS

99.95	IMPLANT
99.85	MALE STERILIZATION
99.8	HORMONAL IUD
99.5	FEMALE STERILIZATION
99.2	COPPER IUD
94	INJECTABLE
82	MALE CONDOM
78	WITHDRAWAL
5	NO METHOD

91%

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Note: Method effectiveness is the percent of women NOT experiencing pregnancy within the first year of use of each method.

It's a common misconception that combined oral contraceptives:



...CAUSE FETAL ABNORMALITIES

RESEARCH SHOWS the risk of pregnancy is extremely low. If a woman does become pregnant, her risk of complications is no higher than the general population.

...CAUSE CANCER

RESEARCH SHOWS users have a reduced risk for ovarian and endometrial cancer. Long-term use may slightly increase risk for breast cancer among current users. Risk among former users is decreased.



...CAUSE INFERTILITY

RESEARCH SHOWS that after discontinuing use, women promptly return to their previous state of fertility. Approximately 79%-95% of women report a desired pregnancy within the first year.

...ARE NOT SAFE FOR YOUTH

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION deems contraception appropriate for youth and states no medical reason to deny contraception based solely on age.

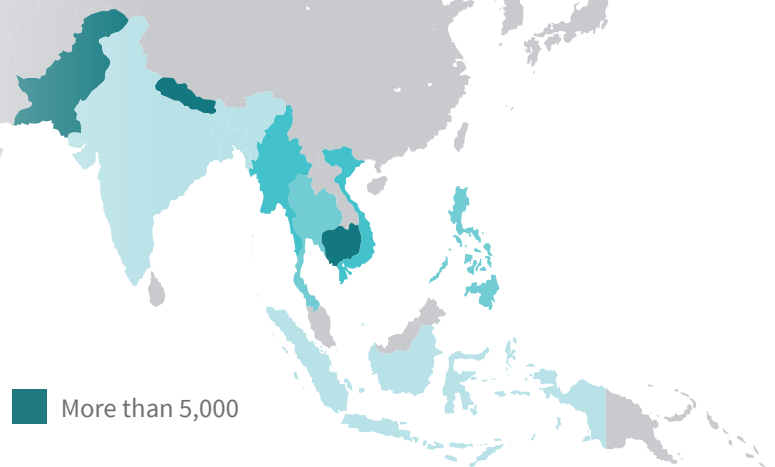


Oral Contraception Use in South Asia

Approximately 37 million women are using oral contraception in South Asia. If oral contraceptives were banned in the Philippines, approximately **3.2 million women would be at risk** of an unintended pregnancy if they chose no other method.

NUMBER OF WOMEN USING ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES (IN THOUSANDS)

Less than 1,000
 1,000-2,000
 2,000-4,000
 More than 5,000



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SOURCES

Robert Hatcher et al., ed. *Contraceptive Technology*, 20th edition (New York: Ardent Media, 2011).

Roberto Rivera, Irene Jacobson, and David Grimes, “The Mechanism of Action of Hormonal Contraceptives and Intrauterine Contraceptive Devices,” *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 181, no. 5 (1999): 1263-69.

World Health Organization (WHO) Department of Reproductive Health and Research (WHO/RHR) and Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs (CCP), Knowledge for Health Project, “Family Planning: A Global Handbook for Providers (2011 update),” (Baltimore and Geneva: USAID, 2011).

Diana Mansour et al., “Fertility After Discontinuation of Contraception: A Comprehensive Review of the Literature,” *Contraception* 84, no. 5 (2011): 465-77.

WHO, *Medical Eligibility for Contraception Use, 5th Edition* (Geneva: WHO, 2015).

Method Effectiveness

Note: Estimates are based on a typical couple’s use of the method. Estimates for perfect use of the method are higher.

Source: Robert Hatcher et al., ed. *Contraceptive Technology*, 20th edition (New York: Ardent Media, 2011).

Number of Women Using Oral Contraceptives

Sources: Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2014, Indonesia DHS 2012, Myanmar DHS 2015-16, Philippines DHS 2013, Thailand DHS 1987, Timor-Leste DHS 2009-10, Vietnam DHS 2002, Bangladesh DHS 2011, India DHS 2005-06, Maldives DHS 2009, Nepal DHS 2011, and Pakistan DHS 2012-13.