

sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

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In the 1960s and 1970s, oral contraception wasn't allowed to be dispensed on campus. Students petitioned the Board of Regents in the early 1980s and won the right to obtain birth control at the Campus Health Service.

Q Will I be able to get pregnant after I stop taking the pill?

A. Yes, as long as you are fertile before you started taking birth control pills (BCPs), you should be just as fertile AFTER stopping. After two months off the pill, fertility rates are the same whether you are a previous user of BCPs or never used them. Some women are able to conceive immediately after discontinuing BCPs while others may experience a delay of 2-3 months. It is safe to get pregnant immediately after stopping the pill.

Oral contraceptive pills are a good option for women who want to become pregnant

in the future. By preventing causes of infertility such as uterine fibroids, pelvic infections, ectopic pregnancies, ovarian cysts, endometrial cancer and possible endometriosis, BCPs **may actually improve** your future ability to get pregnant.

If your periods are irregular prior to taking BCPs, they may again become irregular after stopping BCPs. Having a regular, predictable menstrual cycle can enhance your odds of conceiving when you are ready.

Q Should I take a few months off the pill?

A. No. Overall health and long-term fertility is not improved by periodically "taking a break" from birth control pills (BCPs). Stopping and re-starting oral contraceptives is not medically helpful in any way and may put you at greater risk for pregnancy, since you would have to rely on another method of contraception. Studies have shown that

women who don't take BCPs are actually more likely to be hospitalized or die than women who take BCPs and avoid pregnancy. Even in the age of high-tech medicine, pregnancy itself can be risky due to the potential hazards of a ruptured tubal pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion, or childbirth.



Have a question? Send it to sextalk@email.arizona.edu

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