

sextalk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

factoid The birth control pill was introduced to the public in the early 1960s.

Q. How do birth control pills work?

- A. Birth control pills contain hormones that mimic estrogen and progesterone in a women's body. They work by 1) stopping ovulation (release of mature eggs), 2) thickening cervical mucus (making it harder for sperm to reach an egg), and 3) by thinning the lining of the uterus, reducing the chances of a fertilized egg to implant and develop into a medically viable pregnancy.

Q. Does the pill cause weight gain?

- A. Most women do not notice weight changes on the pill. Some may gain 1-3 pounds. Some women lose weight on the pill. If you have concerns about weight gain, talk with your provider. Sometimes, changing to another type (or dosage) of pill is helpful.

Q. Should I take a break from the pill?

- A. Taking "a break" from the pill is not medically helpful for healthy women. It does not improve future fertility and it greatly increases chance of pregnancy. Studies have shown that the medical complications of pregnancy carry far greater risks than the effects of being on the pill.

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

- A. Some women are able to conceive immediately after discontinuing the pill while others may experience a delay of 2-3 months. By preventing causes of infertility such as uterine fibroids, ectopic pregnancies, ovarian cysts, endometrial cancer and possible endometriosis, the pill may actually improve your future ability to become pregnant.

For more FAQs about birth control click onto www.health.arizona.edu and search for "birth control". For an appointment at the Campus Health Service call 621-9202.

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

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