HOW DO BIRTH CONTROL PILLS WORK?

- Birth control pills contain hormones like the ones your body makes. These hormones stop your ovaries from releasing eggs. Without an egg, you cannot get pregnant.
- No method of birth control is 100% effective. The pill is 91% effective.

HOW DO I START THE PILL?

- There are 2 ways to start the pill:
  - Quick Start: Take your first pill as soon as you get the pack.
  - Next period: Take your first pill soon after your next period begins.
- If you take your first pill up to 5 days after the start of your period, you are protected against pregnancy right away.
- If you take your first pill more than 5 days after the start of your period, you should use condoms as back-up for the first 7 days.

HOW DO I USE THE PILL?

- Once you start using the pill, take 1 pill each day. Take your pill at the same time each day.
- After you finish a pack of pills, you should start a new pack the next day. You should have NO day without a pill.

WHAT IF I MISS PILLS?

- I forgot ONE pill: Take your pill as soon as you can.
- I forgot TWO pills or more: Take your pill as soon as you can. Take your next pill at the usual time. Use condoms for 7 days. Use emergency contraception (EC) if you have unprotected sex.

WHAT IF I STOPPED TAKING THE PILL AND HAD UNPROTECTED SEX?

- Take Emergency Contraception (EC) right away. EC can prevent pregnancy up to 5 days after sex, and it works better the sooner you take it.

HOW DOES THE PILL HELP ME?

- The pill is safe and effective birth control.
- Your periods may be more regular, lighter, and shorter. You may have clearer skin.
- The pill lowers your risk of getting cancer of the uterus and ovaries.
- The pill has no effect on your ability to get pregnant in the future, after you stop taking it.

HOW WILL I FEEL ON THE PILL?

- You will feel about the same. In the first 2-3 months you may have nausea, bleeding between periods, weight change, and/or breast pain. These problems often go away after 2-3 months.

DOES THE PILL HAVE RISKS?

- The pill is very safe. Serious problems are rare. If you have any of the symptoms below, call your health provider.
  - Leg pain, swelling, and redness
  - Weakness or numbness on 1 side of your body
  - Bad headache
  - Vision problems
  - Chest pain
- Your clinician can help you find out if these symptoms are signs of a serious problem.

Remember, the pill does not protect you from Sexually Transmitted Infections or HIV. Always use condoms to protect yourself!