

# Let's Talk About The Pill

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Memorandum

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To: Advanced Writing in the Health Professions Class

From: Jasmine Fu

Subject: Birth Control Pill Infographic

The birth control pill is the most popular form of contraception for women in the United States. Nearly twelve million American women, ranging from teenagers to middle-aged adults, use the pill to prevent pregnancy, regulate menstruation, reduce premenstrual symptoms, and more. However, despite the pill's widespread use, many women remain unaware of how the pill works until they actually begin using it. Both men and women know how to use male condoms by their high school years because no prescription is required for condoms, and condoms can easily be purchased in convenience stores. In contrast, since birth control pills are a hormonal form of contraception, they require a prescription and are more expensive to obtain. Birth control pills require counseling, money, and medical insurance; therefore, women usually learn about the pill during college or even later. The lack of general knowledge about the pill can be attributed to various other factors, including religious debates about the ethicality of contraception, political clashes about insurance for birth control, abstinence-only education in public schools, and the social stigma attached to female sexuality.

Politics and religion aside, the goal of the Birth Control Pill Infographic is to clear the fog surrounding the birth control pill from a pharmacological standpoint. Combining text and visuals, the infographic format is an especially effective method of conveying important information without being overwhelmingly detailed. This infographic is meant to reside at the top of the "Birth Control Pill" section on the official website of Planned Parenthood, a national organization that promotes sexual and reproductive health. The high-traffic website is a primary resource for women who wish to learn more about birth control or have difficulty obtaining it, and the infographic would no doubt reach thousands of women who access the site daily. Although the information on the website is already quite thorough, it is completely text-based – the section lacks graphics or images. The infographic makes up for this deficit by adding eye-catching visual aids and an effective summary of the section's information. Any readers who desire more detail than the infographic contains need only to scroll down further.

The design of the infographic is simplistic yet informative. The bright blue and orange colors are eye-catching and match the theme of the Planned Parenthood website. Information is clearly blocked off into four main sections and presented in a logical flow: definitions of the pill, its various uses, mechanism of action, and types of pills. The images work in unison with the text, and the language is simplistic enough for teenagers to understand. Since the infographic does require some prior knowledge of female anatomy (readers must know about the ovaries and

uterus), the infographic is primarily directed toward women of high school and college age. Preteen girls 12 and younger will probably not seek out this infographic because they have not yet started menstruating and therefore have no need for the pill. In addition, many women begin exploring their sexuality in their teenage and young adult years. They are often too young to commit to a single sexual partner, so it is vital that they learn about contraceptive methods as early as possible to avoid unplanned pregnancy.

Although most women use the pill to prevent pregnancy, the pill also serves several non-contraceptive functions that may be surprising to some. In an organized grid, the infographic lists a few of these uses, such as reducing menstrual bleeding and protecting against ovarian cancer. The infographic also briefly compares the two primary types of pills (combination and minipill) and explains how the hormones contained in the pills prevent pregnancy. To aid in understanding and add visual interest, these concepts are delineated by a realistic diagram of a pill pack. However, only minimal detail about hormones and pill types is included because more specific information can be found on the Planned Parenthood website. Lastly, little-known facts (highlighted by a text box and an exclamation mark) are scattered throughout the infographic.

Overall, the birth control pill is an invaluable tool for preventing unplanned pregnancies and promoting proper use of contraception, especially among sexually active teens and young adults. If located on the Planned Parenthood website, the infographic has the potential to reach a wide audience and make a positive impact by encouraging contraceptive use.

## References

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