

Ask The Experts

(NAPSA)—Dear Dr. Hutcherson,

I've been thinking about talking to my OB/GYN about going on the birth control pill, because I have heard that it can help reduce painful cramps and may make my periods lighter. However, my best friend recently said something about her experience with the Pill



Dr. Hutcherson

that made me nervous. According to my friend, sometimes women on the Pill experience bleeding when they're not expecting it, which can be extremely embarrassing!

I thought the Pill was supposed to help control your periods, not make them unpredictable!

Is this true? Do women on the Pill really experience this kind of side effect?

—Prefers No Surprises

Dear Prefers No Surprises,

Unfortunately, this type of situation, known as breakthrough

Women On The Pill Don't Have To Put Up With Breakthrough Bleeding

60% of women agreed breakthrough bleeding may cause a woman to feel unsure about the effectiveness of the Pill

73% of women who have experienced breakthrough bleeding agreed that it would disrupt a woman's sex life

62% of women agreed that breakthrough bleeding or spotting could cause a woman to feel embarrassed or self-conscious

72% of women agreed that breakthrough bleeding or spotting would be inconvenient and could have a negative impact on a woman's life

bleeding, can occur among women who are on the Pill. In fact, according to a recent nationwide survey, 63 percent of women who experienced breakthrough bleeding either stopped using or changed their birth control prescription because of it.

But—the good news is that

some low-dose birth control pills, such as ORTHO TRI-CYCLEN® LO (norgestimate/ethinyl estradiol), provide excellent cycle control and have a low occurrence of breakthrough bleeding and spotting. In a clinical study, fewer than one in five ORTHO TRI-CYCLEN LO users reported these potentially embarrassing side effects in their first month on the Pill.

Since you have some questions about the Pill, I encourage you to speak with your OB/GYN or health care professional. A medical expert can explain how the Pill works and help you choose the type of pill that is right for your body and lifestyle. You can visit www.thepill.com for the full U.S. prescribing information for ORTHO TRI-CYCLEN LO.

Sincerely,

Dr. Hilda Hutcherson, OB/GYN and Co-Director of the New York Center for Women's Sexual Health, Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, and consultant for Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceutical, Inc.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

Oral contraceptives are not for everybody. Most side effects of the Pill are not serious and those that are, occur infrequently. Serious risks, which can be life threatening, include blood clots, stroke, and heart attacks, and are increased if you smoke cigarettes. Cigarette smoking increases the risk of serious cardiovascular side effects, especially if you're over 35. Women who use oral contraceptives are strongly advised not to smoke. Some women should not use the Pill, including women who have blood clots, certain cancers, a history of heart attack or stroke, as well as those who are or may be pregnant. **The Pill does not protect against HIV or sexually transmitted diseases.**