Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

# PROGESTOGEN-ONLY CONTRACEPTIVE TABLETS

## What does it do?

*Progestogen-only contraceptive tablets* contain the hormone progestogen and are used to prevent pregnancy. See Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa for more information.They may also be used to treat endometriosis.
There are 3 different *progestogen-only contraceptive tablets* available in Aotearoa New Zealand: norethisterone (Noriday®), levonorgestrel (Microlut®), and desogestrel (Cerazette®).

## Before you start

- It's important to make sure you're not pregnant.
- Tell your doctor if you, or someone in your family, has ever had breast cancer.
- *Progestogen-only contraceptive tablets* are effective at preventing pregnancy straight away if you start in the first 5 days of your period. If you start after this, you need to use condoms (or don't have sex) for the next 2 days.

## How should you take it?

Take your tablet regularly at the same time each day. You can take it with or without food.
You must take norethisterone or levonorgestrel within 3 hours of the same time each day. You must take desogestrel within 12 hours of the same time each day.

## What if you forget a dose?

Take it as soon as you remember, then take your next tablet at the usual time (even if this means taking 2 tablets at the same time). If you are more than 3 hours late for norethisterone or levonorgestrel, or more than 12 hours for desogestrel, you need to use condoms (or don‘t have sex) for the next 2 days.

## Can you take other medicines?

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products (e.g. St John's wort) or recreational drugs.

## What side effects might you notice?

| Side Effects | Recommended action |
|---|---|
| Changes in periods<br>Mood changes<br>Headache<br>Acne<br>Weight gain<br>Sore breasts<br>Nausea, bloating | Tell your doctor if troublesome |

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

## Other information:

- If you vomit or have very bad diarrhoea within 2 hours of taking your tablet, take another one. If you can't, or the vomiting or diarrhoea continues, use condoms (or don't have sex) until you have taken your tablet for 2 days in a row after the vomiting or diarrhoea has stopped.
- *Progestogen-only contraceptive tablets* do not protect you from sexually transmitted infections.
- Taking *progestogen-only contraceptive tablets* doesn't make it harder to get pregnant if you want to later on. You can get pregnant as soon as you stop taking *progestogen-only contraceptive tablets*.