

**TABLE. Hormonal contraceptives at a glance**

Type	Dosage	Side effects	Failure rate <sup>a</sup>
Combination OCPs	1 tablet/d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common: GI upset, irregular bleeding, and changes in weight and mood</li> <li>• Rare: hypertension, thromboembolism</li> </ul>	1-2
Progestin-only pills	1 tablet/d	Breast tenderness, irregular bleeding, and weight gain	2
Injection	IM or SC, every 3 mo	Breast tenderness, irregular bleeding, headache, and weight gain	<1 (IM)
Vaginal ring	1 ring/3 wk; removed for 1 wk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as combination OCPs</li> <li>• May also cause vaginitis or increased vaginal discharge</li> </ul>	1-2
Transdermal patch	1 patch/3 wk; removed for 1 wk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as combination OCPs</li> <li>• Dermatologic reaction at application site may occur</li> <li>• May be less effective in patients &gt;198 lb</li> </ul>	1-2
Drug-eluting IUD	1 device/5 y	Same as injection Dysmenorrhea and vaginal discharge	<1
Subdermal implant	1 implant/3 y	Same as injection	<1

Key: IUD, intrauterine device; OCPs, oral contraceptive pills.

<sup>a</sup> Failure rate = number of pregnancies per 100 patients per year.

Data from Gebhart F; *Pharmacist's Letter/Prescriber's Letter*,<sup>2</sup> American Academy of Family Physicians Web site,<sup>3,5</sup> Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals Inc,<sup>6</sup> Organon USA Inc,<sup>7</sup> and Birth Control Guide. FDA Web site. <http://www.fda.gov/Fdac/features/t1997/babyguide2.pdf> Accessed on February 6, 2008.