



Birth Control and Acne Simplified

Birth control pills, IUDs, implants and shots are popular forms of birth control. Typically, these forms of birth control are divided up as estrogen or progestin dominant and have varying degrees of androgenic (testosterone like) effects. Those with the potential for higher androgenic effects may exacerbate acne breakouts. The FDA has approved the following types of birth control for acne:

- Ortho Tri-Cyclen (norgestimate/ethinyl estradiol)
- Estrostep (norethindrone acetate/ethinyl estradiol) (discontinued)
- YAZ (drospirenone/ethinyl estradiol). The FDA has concluded that birth control pills containing drospirenone may have increased risk for blood clots compared to pills containing other progestins. Other brands containing drospirenone include Beyaz, Gianvi, Loryna, Ocella, Safyral, Syeda, Yasmin, and Zarah.

Other common examples of birth control pills that are estrogen dominant and are less often associated with exacerbating acne that you should discuss with your doctor (list is not exhaustive):

- Brevicon
- Ortho-Novum 1/35
- Tri-Sprintec
- MonoNessa
- Necon
- Tri-Previfem
- Modicon
- Tilia Fe
- Tri-Legest Fe
- Kelnor
- Sprintec
- Zovia 1/35
- Cyclofem 1/35
- Pirmella 1/35
- Wymzya Fe

Common examples of birth control that is progestin dominant and are more often associated with exacerbating acne breakouts, that you should discuss with your doctor (list is not exhaustive):

- Alesse
- Azurette
- Depo-Provera
- Implanon
- Lessina
- Loestrin
- Lo-Ovral
- Microgestin
- Nexplanon
- NuvaRing
- Portia
- Sronyx
- Amethyst
- Cryselle
- Desogen
- Jolessa
- Levora
- Lo-Feminol
- Lutera
- Mircette
- Nordette
- Ortho Tricyclen Lo
- Reclipsen
- Triphasil/Trivora
- Apri
- Cyclessa
- Emoquette
- Kariva
- Linessa
- Lo-Ogestrel
- Marvelon
- Mirena or Skyla IUD
- Norplant
- Paragard/Copper IUD*
- Seasonale/Seasonique
- Velivet

*Hormone free, however, there have been reports of higher copper levels triggering acne

Please speak with your doctor about the birth control method that will be best for you. You should familiarize yourself with the benefits and risks of any birth control.

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