<table>
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<th>Therapeutic Use</th>
<th>Administration</th>
<th>Patient Instructions</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Prevention of pregnancy</td>
<td>• Confirm negative pregnancy status before starting therapy.</td>
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<td>• Reduction in fluid retention associated with premenstrual syndrome</td>
<td>• Use an additional method of contraception during the first cycle.</td>
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| • Other benefits of oral contraceptives include decreased risk for:  
  - Uterine and ovarian cancers  
  - Pelvic inflammatory disease  
  - Benign breast disease  
  - Ovarian cysts | • Take pills at the same time each day.  
• Take according to the precise dosing schedule, typically 21 days of a drug-containing pill and 7 days of an inactive pill.  
• Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for missed pills, typically taking one missed pill with the next pill, two pills for 2 consecutive days after 2 missed days, and after 3 missed days starting a new cycle 7 days later with alternative contraception in the interim. |  |

### Side/Adverse Effects

- **Thromboembolism**  
  - Monitor for and report any indications of deep-vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, myocardial infarction, and cerebrovascular accident.  
  - Encourage patients who smoke to quit.  
  - Report leg or chest pain, leg edema, sudden change in vision, severe headache, or shortness of breath.  
  - Do not smoke.  
  - Stop taking at least 4 weeks before any surgery that increases the risk of thromboembolic events.

- **Hyperkalemia (due to the drospirenone in this drug)**  
  - Monitor potassium levels and ECG periodically.  
  - Report palpitations, paresthesias, weakness, or abdominal cramps.

- **Hypertension (less likely with ethinyl estradiol and drospirenone than with other combination oral contraceptives)**  
  - Monitor blood pressure.  
  - Obtain regular blood pressure checks.

- **Uterine bleeding**  
  - Monitor the pattern and amount of any reported bleeding.  
  - Report any unusual breakthrough bleeding or spotting or changes in menstrual patterns.

- **Increased growth of breast malignancies**  
  - Recommend mammograms and breast examinations at appropriate intervals.  
  - Discontinue the drug for any indications of breast cancer.  
  - Perform self-breast examination every month.  
  - Obtain a mammogram and breast examination at the recommended intervals.

### Contraindications

- **Pregnancy (risk category X)**  
- History or other risk for thromboembolic events  
- Suspected or confirmed breast cancer  
- Altered liver function  
- Altered renal or adrenal function (estradiol and drospirenone)  
- Smokers above age 35

### Precautions

- **Hypertension**  
- Diabetes mellitus  
- Heart disease  
- Migraines

### Interactions

- **ACE inhibitors and other drugs that can elevate serum potassium can cause hyperkalemia (due to drospirenone).**  
- **Rifampin (Rifadin), ritonavir (Norvir), phenobarbital (Luminal), carbamazepine (Tegretol), primidone (Mysoline), phenytoin (Dilantin), and St. John’s Wort can reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives.**  
- **Oral contraceptives can reduce the effects of warfarin (Coumadin) and hypoglycemic drugs.**  
- **Oral contraceptives can increase levels of theophylline (Theo-24), diazepam (Valium), chlordiazepoxide (Librium), and tricyclic antidepressants.**