



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

Improving lifelong well-being



## *Hormonal treatments with COCP and POP*

The aim of hormonal treatments is to limit the production of oestrogen (a female hormone released by the ovaries) in your body.

There are 2 types of the “pill” that we commonly use: Combined Oral Contraceptive Pill (COCP), which contains a synthetic oestrogen and progesterone, and a Progestogen-Only Pill (POP), which contains synthetic progesterone only.

### **COCP**

#### **How does it work?**

The COCP works by preventing ovulation and also stops the lining of the womb becoming thick so that there is less blood loss when you have a period.

It may help to reduce pain, as the muscles of the womb do not have to contract as much when you have a bleed.

#### **How is it taken?**

Each pack contains 21 tablets. One tablet is taken daily, followed by a break of 7 pill-free days where you will have a withdrawal bleed, which should be much lighter and less painful.

It is possible to run several packs of the COCP together to avoid having a bleed at all. Your doctor or nurse will be able to advise you on this.

### **POP**

#### **How does it work?**

Cerazette, a POP, contains desogestrel, which is similar to the progesterone in your body. It is sometimes known as the “mini pill”.

It also works by preventing ovulation and stopping the lining of the womb from becoming thick.

#### **How is it taken?**

Cerazette contains 28 tablets. One tablet should be taken at the same time every day, and definitely within 12 hours. This is especially important if you are also using it as a contraceptive. When your pack is finished you should start on the next pack without a break.