

## Combined pill and risks

### RFQs

- Do you have a family history of clots: deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism?
- Do you get migraine? Have you ever had a warning aura before your migraine? Usually an aura is a visual symptom such as a zigzag lines or a blank spot.
- Do you have a family history of breast cancer?

### Provide

You sound as if you might prefer to use a combined pill. It increases your risk of leg and lung clots from 2 clots per 10,000 women years to 5 per 10,000 women years (or up to 10 with Yasmin or Dianette). That is a reasonable choice for you, since you have a relatively low risk of clots. Are you happy with that size of risk, or would you prefer another method of contraception?

Some women choose the combined pill because it usually gives them a reliable withdrawal bleed or period. But it is also OK to use the combined pill without a break until there is breakthrough bleeding, when you can stop the pill for 5 days, to allow the lining of the womb to come away.

### Safety net:

However, you would need to be seen urgently if you have a painful swelling of your calf, or if you have pain in your lungs or chest pain when you breathe. Or if you are coughing up blood, or you are breathless.

If the pill makes your migraine worse or triggers auras, we should swap it to another type of contraception, since worsening migraines or auras are linked with a higher risk of strokes. No, the combined pill doesn't seem to cause breast cancer, but it can certainly make some breast cancers grow faster. We don't generally recommend the combined pill for women who have one of the BRCA mutations for familial breast cancer. And if you were diagnosed with breast cancer, we would swap you to another type of contraception.