

# THE PILL OVER THE COUNTER: INCREASING ACCESS

People may soon have another accessible option for preventing pregnancy - the contraceptive pill being available on pharmacy shelves, without a prescription. This major breakthrough is nearing its final stages of FDA approval.

## ANOTHER SAFE OVER-THE-COUNTER CONTRACEPTIVE OPTION

- People may soon have another accessible option for preventing pregnancy.
- The FDA will have the opportunity to approve access to birth control pills without a prescription.
- The pill has a 60 year safety record, with decades of research about its safety.

## WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR OVER-THE- COUNTER ACCESS

- Major medical associations have studied the evidence and support the effort to achieve over-the-counter access.
- A large majority — 70% — of reproductive-aged women support making the contraceptive pill available over the counter without a prescription.

## REDUCING BARRIERS

- People who may benefit the most from the pill on-the-shelf are those in rural areas, people who can't afford doctor visits, hourly workers who cannot easily get time off of work, people in between insurance plans, and those who want a more convenient option.
- An affordable pill over-the-counter without restrictions would make it easier for people to physically and logistically access birth control in their communities.
- Access to safe and effective birth control over the counter will reduce unintended pregnancies.
- The contraceptive pill is the most common form of reversible contraception in the United States.
- One in three women currently using a less effective birth control method report they would start using the pill if it were available over the counter.

“ *The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists supports over-the-counter access to hormonal contraception with no age restrictions.* ”

### TIMELINE: SIX DECADES OF SAFETY EVIDENCE AND RESEARCH

1960

The FDA approves the birth control pill for contraception.

2004

The OCs OTC Working Group forms to explore the potential of over-the-counter access to oral contraceptives.

2012

ACOG recommends the pill be accessible to all over the counter.

2015

The FDA begins the rigorous review process of a switch to OTC status for the pill.

2022

Possible FDA expert hearings on the pill becoming available without a prescription.

2022 - 2024

Potential FDA approval for over-the-counter access to the pill for all ages.

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