

# Alesse

Alesse - Alesse is a progestin (levonorgestrel) and estrogen (ethinyl estradiol) combination birth control pill used to prevent pregnancy.

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## Drug name

Alesse(Levonorgestrel/ Ethinyl Estradiol)

## Drug Uses

Alesse is a progestin (levonorgestrel) and estrogen (ethinyl estradiol) combination birth control pill used to prevent pregnancy.

## How Taken

Use Alesse as directed by your doctor.

- Take Alesse by mouth with or without food. If stomach upset occurs, take with food to reduce stomach irritation.
- Begin taking Alesse on the first Sunday following the start of your period, unless otherwise directed by your doctor. If your period begins on a Sunday, begin taking Alesse on that day. Try to take Alesse at the same time every day, not more than 24 hours apart. After taking the last pill in the pack, start taking the first pill from a new pack the very next day.
- For Alesse to be effective it must be taken every day. Do not skip doses. Ask your health care provider any questions you may have about how to use Alesse.

## Drug Class and Mechanism

Alesse works by preventing ovulation (the release of an egg from an ovary) and causing changes in the mucus of the cervix which make it difficult for sperm to penetrate and for an egg to implant. This medication may also be used to treat acne in women 14 years of age and older or to regulate the menstrual cycle.

## Missed Dose

If you miss a dose of Alesse and remember it on the same day, take it as soon as possible and go back to your regular dosing schedule. If you do not remember until the next day or if you miss more than 1 dose of Alesse, see the additional patient information leaflet that comes with Alesse or contact your doctor for further instructions. You may need to use an extra form of birth control (e.g., condoms). If you are not sure about how to handle missed doses of Alesse, use an extra form of birth control (e.g., condoms) until you talk with your doctor.

## Storage

Store Alesse at room temperature, between 68 and 77 degrees F (20 and 25 degrees C). Store away from heat, moisture, and light. Do not store in the bathroom. Keep in a tight, light-resistant container. Keep Alesse out of the reach of children and away from pets.

## Warnings Precautions

Do not use Alesse if:

- ◆ you are allergic to any ingredient in Alesse;
- ◆ you are or suspect that you are pregnant;
- ◆ you have had surgery and are confined to a bed or a chair for an extended period of time.

Contact your doctor or health care provider right away if any of these apply to you. Important :

- ◆ Alesse may cause dizziness. This effect may be worse if you take it with alcohol or certain medicines. Use Alesse with caution. Do not drive or perform other possibly unsafe tasks until you know how you react to it.
- ◆ Follow your doctor's instructions for examining your own breasts, and report any lumps immediately.
- ◆ If you will be having surgery or will be confined to a bed or chair for a long period of time (such as a long plane flight), notify your doctor 3 to 4 weeks ahead of time. Special precautions may need to be taken in these circumstances while taking Alesse.
- ◆ Alesse may cause dark skin patches on your face. Exposure to the sun may make these patches darker. If patches develop, use a sunscreen or protected clothing when exposed to the sun, sunlamps, or tanning booths.
- ◆ Use of Alesse will not protect against HIV infection or prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
- ◆ Bleeding or spotting may occur while taking Alesse. Do not stop taking Alesse if this occurs. If bleeding or spotting continues for more than 7 days or is heavy, contact your doctor.
- ◆ Alesse may interfere with certain lab tests. Be sure your doctor and lab personnel know you are using Alesse.
- ◆ Taking certain antibiotics, anticonvulsants, or other medicines, as listed in the interactions section, while you are using Alesse may decrease the effectiveness of Alesse . To prevent pregnancy, use an additional form of birth control until your next period.
- ◆ If you wear contact lens and you develop problems with them, contact your doctor.
- ◆ If you miss your period during the week of inactive pills, call your doctor immediately. A missed period may indicate that you are pregnant.
- ◆ Pregnancy and breast-feeding: Do not use Alesse if you are pregnant. Avoid becoming pregnant while you are taking it. If you think you may be pregnant, contact your doctor right away. Alesse is found in breast milk. Do not breast-feed while taking Alesse.

## Possible Side Effects

Check with your doctor if any of these most common side effects persist or become bothersome:

- ◆ acne; breast tenderness or enlargement; changes in appetite; changes in sexual interest; changes in weight; dizziness; hair loss; headache; nausea; stomach cramps or bloating; unusual spotting or bleeding; vomiting.

Seek medical attention right away if any of these severe side effects occur:

- ◆ severe allergic reactions (rash; hives; itching; difficulty breathing; tightness in the chest; swelling of the mouth, face, lips, or tongue); breast discharge; breast lumps; calf/leg pain, swelling, or tenderness; change in amount of urine produced; change in vaginal secretions; changes in vision or speech; confusion; coughing of blood; crushing chest pain or heaviness in the chest; dark-colored urine; depression; difficulty sleeping; difficulty wearing contact lenses; fainting; fluid retention (swelling of the fingers and ankles); lack of energy; light-colored bowel movements; mental or mood changes; missed menstrual period; numbness of an arm or leg; one-sided weakness; persistent headache or migraines; persistent or recurrent abnormal vaginal bleeding; persistent or severe dizziness; severe pain or tenderness in the stomach; sudden partial or complete loss of vision; sudden severe headache or vomiting; shortness of breath; tiredness; vaginal irritation or discharge; weakness; yellowing of the skin or eyes.

### **More Information**

Alesse is to be used only by the patient for whom it is prescribed. Do not share it with other people.

If your symptoms do not improve or if they become worse, check with your doctor.

### **Site:**

Alesse