

Birth Control and CF Medications

Birth Control Guide for People With CF

ANTIBIOTICS (ORAL, IV, OR INHALED)

“I’m afraid some of my medications will interact with my birth control or make it less effective...” You may have heard that all antibiotics can react with hormonal birth control and make it less effective. This statement is **NOT** true. Newer studies show that very few antibiotics or antifungals react with hormonal birth control. The ones that do are not commonly used to treat CF exacerbations.^{1,2}

Antibiotics and antifungals that do **NOT** make hormonal birth control less effective:

- Amoxicillin/clavulanic acid (Augmentin®)
- Azithromycin
- Aztreonam (Cayston®)
- Cefdinir (Omnicef Omni-Pac®, Omnicef®)
- Cefepime (Maxipime®)
- Cephalexin (Keflex®)
- Ciprofloxacin (Cipro®, Proquin® XR)
- Colistimethate (Colistin®)
- Doxycycline
- Fluconazole (Diflucan®)
- Itraconazole (Sporanox®, Tolsura®, Onmel®, Sporanox PulsePak®)
- Levofloxacin (Levaquin®)
- Minocycline
- Penicillin/amoxicillin
- Piperacillin/tazobactam (Zosyn®)
- Posaconazole (Noxafil®)
- Sulfamethoxazole/trimethoprim (Bactrim®)
- Tobramycin (TOBI®, Tobi Podhaler®, Bethkis®, Kitabis Pak®)
- Vancomycin
- Voriconazole (Vfend®)

Antibiotics and antifungals that **DO** make hormonal birth control less effective:

- Rifabutin
 - Rifampin
 - Griseofulvin
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Talk to your care team or pharmacist if you take a medication that is not on this list or if you have questions. They can tell if any of your medications react with your birth control.

NIRMATRELVIR/RITONAVIR (Paxlovid™)

Nirmatrelvir/ritonavir (Paxlovid™) is a medication for treating COVID-19 in some patients. It reacts with birth control that has estrogen. You will need to use a backup method to prevent pregnancy if you are on this kind of birth control and taking this medication.³

POST-TRANSPLANT MEDICATIONS

Post-transplant regimens that have mycophenolate can react with hormonal birth control. It can make these methods less effective. Some post-transplant medications are also teratogenic. This means they could cause birth defects in a developing fetus. You would need to use more than one birth control method if taking these medications. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about your birth control choices if you are taking post-transplant medications.¹

CFTR MODULATORS

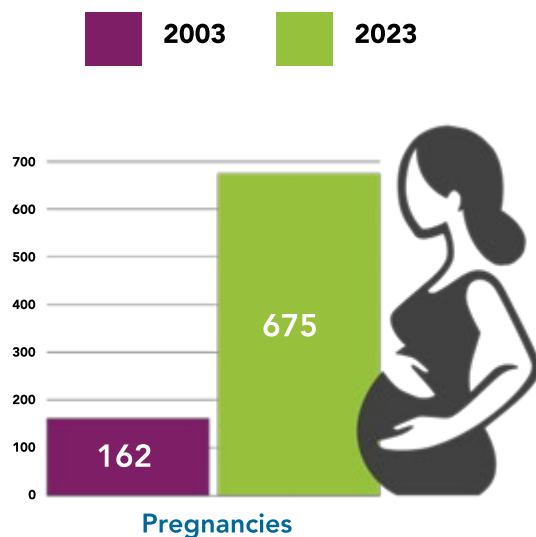
There are four currently approved CFTR modulators:

- Elexacaftor/tezacaftor/ivacaftor (Trikafta®)
- Tezacaftor/ivacaftor (Symdeko®)
- Lumacaftor/ivacaftor (Orkambi®)
- Ivacaftor (Kalydeco®)

Talk to your CF care team about pregnancy if you are starting or taking a CFTR modulator. Consider using a form of birth control that is right for you to prevent unplanned pregnancies.

Modulators, especially Trikafta or Kalydeco, may make it easier for females with CF to become pregnant. They do so by:

- Thinning the cervical mucus and making it less acidic. This can make it easier for sperm to get through to fertilize an egg.
- Improving nutrition and overall health.



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Pregnancy rates (both planned and unplanned) in females with CF have risen since the approval of Trikafta in late 2019.^{4,5}

“I’ve heard that modulators make birth control less effective.”

Trikafta, Kalydeco, and Symdeko DO NOT react with hormonal birth control. Hormonal birth control works just as well for females on these medications as it does for those who are not.

Orkambi DOES make hormonal birth control less effective. You will need to use a nonhormonal birth control if taking this medication.⁴ If you are on Orkambi and using birth control for a reason other than pregnancy prevention (like to regulate periods, heavy bleeding, or acne) it is still safe to take these medications together. But, you may notice more breakthrough symptoms.⁶

PANCREATIC ENZYMES

“I’m afraid that I won’t absorb birth control pills like I should because of my CF.”

Pancreatic enzymes do not react with hormonal or nonhormonal birth control. Studies show that females with CF can absorb birth control pills. Oral birth control pills are safe and effective for females with CF.⁶

REFERENCES

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This information meets the guidelines and standards of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation’s Education Committee.