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Frequently Asked Question (FAQs) About the Hormonal Contraception Standing Order

- **How do I get birth control from a pharmacist in Illinois?**
 - The Illinois Pharmacy Practice Act allows pharmacist to dispense no more than a 12-month supply of hormonal contraceptives pursuant to a standing order issued by the Illinois Department of Public Health's Medical Director. Licensed pharmacists who have completed the necessary training may administer or dispense hormonal contraceptive methods without a prescription from a physician. The State does not have a list of pharmacists available to administer or dispense hormonal contraceptives in Illinois. Contact your local pharmacy to learn whether the pharmacist on staff is certified and available.

- **What kinds of birth control can I get directly from a pharmacist without a prescription from my physician?**
 - Only an Illinois-licensed pharmacist, who has completed an Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) accredited educational training program related to the prescribing of contraceptives by a pharmacist, may dispense hormonal contraceptives, including hormonal patches, hormonal vaginal rings, oral hormonal contraceptives, and hormonal contraceptive injections to a patient. To determine which birth control method works best for you, you are required to fill out a self-screening risk assessment questionnaire provided to you at the pharmacy. The pharmacist then reviews the questionnaire and conducts other measures, such as a blood pressure reading before determining which hormonal contraceptive method would be best for you.

- **Can a pharmacist refuse to administer or dispense hormonal contraceptives?**
 - Yes. If the pharmacist finds any cause for concern during the screening process, the pharmacist should refuse to administer or dispense any hormonal contraceptives and refer the patient to a physician.

- **How safe and effective is getting birth control from a pharmacist?**
 - With appropriate use, hormonal contraceptives are very effective. Additionally, pharmacists must be trained prior to administering or dispensing hormonal contraceptives to determine if it is safe for a patient to receive hormonal birth control. Safety is of the utmost importance, and pharmacists may only administer or dispense hormonal contraceptives to people who meet certain medical eligibility criteria. This criterion is determined through a self-screening risk assessment tool.

- **How does allowing pharmacists to prescribe hormonal contraceptives expand access and reduce barriers to care?**
 - Pharmacies, in many regions of the State, are more easily accessible for people compared to physicians' offices. This allows more people to get access to birth control that they may not have had access to before.

- **Can I use my health insurance to pay for birth control provided directly by a pharmacist?**
 - Individuals should check with their health insurance providers to determine if birth control provided directly by a pharmacist will be covered.

- **Can I go to any pharmacy and get birth control without a prescription from my physician?**
 - Only pharmacies with a pharmacist on site that has completed the ACPE accredited training can administer or dispense hormonal contraceptives without a prescription from a physician. The State does not have a list of pharmacists available to administer or dispense hormonal contraceptives in Illinois. Contact your local pharmacy to learn whether the pharmacist on staff is certified and available.