

PRODUCT MONOGRAPH
INCLUDING PATIENT MEDICATION INFORMATION

Pr **ELFY™**

Ethinyl Estradiol Tablets / Norethindrone Acetate and Ethinyl Estradiol Tablets
Tablets, 10 mcg ethinyl estradiol / 1 mg norethindrone acetate and 10 mcg
ethinyl estradiol, Oral

USP

Oral Contraceptive ATC Code: G03AB04

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RECENT MAJOR LABEL CHANGES

Not applicable	
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Sections or subsections that are not applicable at the time of authorization are not listed.

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PART I: HEALTH PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

1 INDICATIONS

ELFY (ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets) is indicated for:

- the prevention of pregnancy.

In a one year (thirteen 28-day cycles) multicenter open-label clinical trial 1,582 women were studied to assess the safety and efficacy of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets. In this study 1,270 women 18 to 35 years of age were studied to assess the efficacy of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets, completing the equivalent of 12,482 28-day evaluable cycles of exposure. **The pregnancy rate (Pearl Index [PI]) in women 18 to 35 years of age was 2.92 pregnancies per 100 women-years of use.** See [14 CLINICAL TRIALS](#).

The efficacy of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets in women with a body mass index > 35 kg/m² has not been evaluated.

Exposure to exogenous estrogen with ELFY is less than with other combined oral contraceptives with similar synthetic estrogens. Any benefits from the lower estrogen exposure provided by ELFY have not been evaluated.

1.1 Pediatrics

Pediatrics (< 18 years): No data are available to Health Canada; therefore, Health Canada has not authorized an indication for pediatric use.

1.2 Geriatrics

Geriatrics: No data are available to Health Canada; therefore, Health Canada has not authorized an indication for geriatric use.

2 CONTRAINDICATIONS

- Use with the hepatitis C virus (HCV) combination drug regimen ombitasvir, paritaprevir, ritonavir with or without dasabuvir. See [7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS](#).
- ELFY is contraindicated in patients who are hypersensitive to this drug or to any ingredient in the formulation, including any non-medicinal ingredient, or component of the container. For a complete listing, see [6 DOSAGE FORMS, COMPOSITION AND PACKAGING](#).

ELFY should not be used in women with:

- a history of or actual thrombophlebitis or thromboembolic disorders (such as deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism);
- a history of or actual cerebrovascular disorders;
- a history of or actual myocardial infarction or coronary artery disease;
- valvular heart disease with complications;
- history of or actual prodromi of a thrombosis (e.g., transient ischaemic attack, angina pectoris);

- active liver disease, or history of or actual benign or malignant liver tumours;
- known or suspected carcinoma of the breast;
- carcinoma of the endometrium or other known or suspected estrogen-dependent neoplasia;
- undiagnosed abnormal vaginal bleeding;
- steroid-dependent jaundice, cholestatic jaundice, history of jaundice of pregnancy;
- any ocular lesion arising from ophthalmic vascular disease, such as partial or complete loss of vision or defect in visual fields;
- known or suspected pregnancy;
- current or history of migraine with focal aura;
- history of or actual pancreatitis if associated with severe hypertriglyceridaemia;
- presence of severe or multiple risk factor(s) for arterial or venous or thrombosis such as:
 - severe hypertension (persistent values of $\geq 160/100$ mmHg)
 - uncontrolled hypertension
 - hereditary or acquired predisposition for venous or arterial thrombosis such as Factor V Leiden mutation and activated protein C (APC-) resistance, antithrombin-III-deficiency, protein C deficiency, protein S deficiency, hyperhomocysteinemia (e.g., due to MTHFR C677T, A1298 mutations), prothrombin mutation G20210A, and antiphospholipid- antibodies (anticardiolipin antibodies, lupus anticoagulant)
 - severe dyslipoproteinemia
 - over age 35 and smoke
 - diabetes mellitus with vascular involvement
 - major surgery associated with an increased risk of postoperative thromboembolism
 - prolonged immobilization

3 SERIOUS WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS BOX

Serious Warnings and Precautions

- Cigarette smoking increases the risk of serious cardiovascular events associated with the use of hormonal contraceptives. This risk increases with age, particularly in women over 35 years of age, and with the number of cigarettes smoked. For this reason, ELFY should not be used by women who are over 35 years of age and smoke. See [Cardiovascular](#).
- Patients should be counselled that birth control pills **DO NOT PROTECT** against sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS. For protection against STIs, it is advisable to use latex or polyurethane condoms **IN COMBINATION WITH** birth control pills.

4 DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION

4.1 Dosing Considerations

To achieve maximum contraceptive effectiveness, ELFY should be taken exactly as directed and at intervals not exceeding 24 hours.

- ELFY tablets may be administered without regard to meals.
- ELFY provides a regimen consisting of 24 blue estrogen-progestin tablets, 2 white

estrogen-only tablets, and 2 lilac placebo tablets.

4.2 Recommended Dose and Dosage Adjustment

During the first cycle of use:

- The possibility of ovulation and conception prior to initiation of medication should be considered. The patient is instructed to begin taking ELFY on either Day 1 of menstruation (Day 1 Start) or the first Sunday after the onset of menstruation (Sunday Start). If menstruation begins on a Sunday, the first tablet (blue) is taken that day. One blue tablet should be taken daily for 24 consecutive days followed by one white tablet for 2 consecutive days, followed by one lilac tablet daily for 2 consecutive days. During the first cycle with a Sunday Start, contraceptive reliance should not be placed on ELFY until a blue tablet has been taken daily for 7 consecutive days and a non-hormonal back-up method of birth control (such as latex or polyurethane condoms or spermicide) should be used during those 7 days. ELFY is effective from the first day of therapy if the tablets are begun on the first day of the menstrual cycle.
- The patient begins her next and all subsequent 28-day courses of tablets on the same day of the week on which she began her first course, following the same schedule: 24 days on blue tablets – 2 days on white tablets - 2 days on lilac tablets. If in any cycle the patient starts tablets later than the proper day, she should protect herself against pregnancy by using a non-hormonal back-up method of birth control until she has taken a blue tablet daily for 7 consecutive days.

Health Canada has not authorized an indication for pediatric use. See [1 INDICATIONS](#).

4.4 Administration

Switching from another hormonal method of contraception:

When the patient is switching to ELFY after completing a 21-day regimen of oral contraceptive tablets, transdermal patches, or a vaginal ring, she should wait 7 days after her last tablet, patch, or ring before she starts ELFY. She will probably experience withdrawal bleeding during that week. She should be sure that no more than 7 days pass after her previous 21-day regimen. When the patient is switching to ELFY after completing a 28-day regimen of oral contraceptive tablets, she should start her first pack of ELFY on the day after her last tablet. She should not wait any days between packs. The patient may switch any day from a progestin-only pill and should begin ELFY the next day. If switching from an implant or injection, the patient should start ELFY on the day of implant removal or, if using an injection, the day the next injection would be due. If switching from an intrauterine device (IUD), depending on the timing of removal, back-up contraception may be needed.

If spotting or breakthrough bleeding occurs:

Breakthrough bleeding or spotting may occur in women taking combination oral contraceptives (COC), especially during the first 3 months of use. The patient is instructed to continue on the same regimen. This type of bleeding is usually transient and without significance; however, if the bleeding is persistent or prolonged, the patient is advised to consult her healthcare

provider.

If withdrawal bleeding does not occur:

Although pregnancy is unlikely if ELFY is taken according to directions, if withdrawal bleeding does not occur, the possibility of pregnancy must be considered. If the patient has not adhered to the prescribed schedule (missed one or more tablets or started taking them on a day later than she should have), the probability of pregnancy should be considered at the time of the first missed period and appropriate diagnostic measures taken. If the patient has adhered to the prescribed regimen and misses two consecutive periods, pregnancy should be ruled out. Hormonal contraceptives should be discontinued if pregnancy is confirmed.

Use after pregnancy, abortion or miscarriage:

ELFY should be initiated no earlier than 28 days postpartum in the nonlactating mother due to the increased risk for thromboembolism. When the tablets are administered in the postpartum period, the increased risk of thromboembolic disease associated with the postpartum period must be considered (see [2 CONTRAINDICATIONS](#), and [7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS](#) concerning thromboembolic disease). The patient should be advised to use a non-hormonal back-up method for the first 7 days of tablet taking. However, if intercourse has already occurred, the possibility of ovulation and conception prior to initiation of medication should be considered.

ELFY may be initiated immediately after a first-trimester abortion or miscarriage; if the patient starts ELFY immediately, additional contraceptive measures are not needed.

4.5 Missed Dose

The possibility of follicular growth, ovulation, and risk of pregnancy increases with each successive day that scheduled blue or white tablets are missed. If the patient misses one or more lilac tablets, she is still protected against pregnancy provided she begins taking the active blue tablets again on the proper day. Delayed restarting of active pills may result in reduction of contraceptive reliability.

Missing pills can cause spotting or light bleeding, even if the missed pills are made up. If breakthrough bleeding occurs following missed blue or white tablets, it will usually be transient and of no consequence. Nausea may also occur on the days two pills are taken to make up for missed pills.

The patient should be instructed to use the following chart if she misses 1 or more of her birth control pills. She should be told to match the number of pills missed with the appropriate starting time for her dosing regimen.

Sunday Start	Day 1 Start
Miss 1 blue pill	
Take it as soon as you remember. Take the next pill at the usual time. This means that you might take two pills in one day.	
Miss 2 blue pills in a row in Week 1 or Week 2	

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take two pills the day you remember and two pills the next day. 2. Then take one pill a day until you finish the pack. 3. Use a back-up (barrier) method of birth control if you have sex in the seven days after you miss the pills. 	
Sunday Start	Day 1 Start
Miss 2 pills (blue or white) in a row in Week 3 or Week 4 or Miss 3 or more (blue or white) pills in a row at any time	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keep taking one pill each day until Sunday. 2. On Sunday, safely discard the rest of the pack. Start a new pack that day. 3. Use a back-up method of birth control if you have sex in the seven days after you miss the pills. 4. You may not have a period this month. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safely dispose of the rest of the pill pack. 2. Start a new pack that same day. 3. Use a back-up method of birth control if you have sex in the seven days after you miss the pills. 4. You may not have a period this month.
If you miss two periods in a row, call your healthcare professional.	

Advice in case of vomiting or diarrhea: If vomiting or diarrhea occurs within 3 to 4 hours after a blue or white tablet is taken, absorption may not be complete. In such an event, the advice concerning management of missed pills is applicable.

5 OVERDOSAGE

Serious ill effects have not been reported following acute ingestion of large doses of oral contraceptives by young children. Overdosage may cause nausea and vomiting, and withdrawal bleeding may occur in females. There is no antidote and further treatment should be symptomatic.

For management of a suspected drug overdose, contact your regional poison control centre.

6 DOSAGE FORMS, STRENGTHS, COMPOSITION AND PACKAGING

Table 1 – Dosage Forms, Strengths, Composition and Packaging

Route of Administration	Dosage Form / Strength/Composition	Non-medicinal Ingredients
Oral	White Tablet 10 mcg of ethinyl estradiol	Lactose monohydrate, magnesium stearate, mannitol, microcrystalline cellulose, povidone, sodium starch glycolate and vitamin E

Route of Administration	Dosage Form / Strength/Composition	Non-medicinal Ingredients
	Blue Tablet 1 mg of norethindrone acetate and 10 mcg of ethinyl estradiol	Lactose monohydrate, magnesium stearate, mannitol, microcrystalline cellulose, povidone, sodium starch glycolate, vitamin E and FD&C Blue No. 1 Aluminum Lake
	Lilac Tablet Placebo contains no active ingredients	FD&C Blue No. 1 Aluminum Lake, FD&C Red No. 3 Aluminum Lake, FD&C Red No. 40 Aluminum Lake, lactose monohydrate, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, and sodium starch glycolate,

ELFY is available in blister cards (dispensers) containing 24 blue active tablets, 2 white active tablets and 2 lilac placebo tablets. Each blue tablet is round, flat, debossed with “10” on one side and with “LO” on the opposite side. Each white tablet is, round, flat, debossed with “11” on one side and with “LO” on the opposite side. Each lilac placebo tablet is round, debossed with “12” on one side and with “XI” on the opposite side.

7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS

Please see [3 SERIOUS WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS BOX](#).

General

Discontinue medication at the earliest manifestation of:

- **Thromboembolic and cardiovascular disorders**, such as thrombophlebitis, pulmonary embolism, cerebrovascular disorders, myocardial ischemia, mesenteric thrombosis, proptosis and retinal thrombosis.
- **Conditions which predispose to venous stasis and to vascular thrombosis** (e.g., immobilization after accidents or confinement to bed during long-term illness). Other non-hormonal methods of contraception should be used until regular activities are resumed. For use of oral contraceptives when surgery is contemplated, see [Peri-Operative Considerations](#).
- **Visual defects- partial or complete**
- **Papilledema or ophthalmic vascular lesions**
- **Severe headache of unknown etiology or worsening of pre-existing migraine headache**
- **Increase in epileptic seizures**

The following information is provided from studies of COCs.

The use of combination hormonal contraceptives is associated with increased risks of several serious conditions including myocardial infarction, thromboembolism, stroke, hepatic neoplasia and gallbladder disease, although the risk of serious morbidity and mortality is small in healthy women without underlying risk factors. The risk of morbidity and mortality

increases significantly if associated with the presence of other risk factors such as hypertension, hyperlipidemias, obesity and diabetes. Other medical conditions which have been associated with adverse circulatory events include systemic lupus erythematosus, hemolytic uremic syndrome, chronic inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis), sickle cell disease, valvular heart disease and atrial fibrillation.

The following conditions have been reported to occur or deteriorate with both pregnancy and COC use, although a direct association with COCs has not been firmly established: porphyria, systemic lupus erythematosus, hemolytic uremic syndrome, Sydenham's chorea, herpes gestationis, and otosclerosis-related hearing loss.

The information contained in this section is principally from studies carried out in women who used combination oral contraceptives with higher formulations of estrogens and progestins than those in common use today. The effect of long-term use of combination hormonal contraceptives with lower doses of both estrogen and progestin administered orally remains to be determined.

Carcinogenesis and Mutagenesis

Breast cancer:

Women who currently have or have had breast cancer should not use ELFY because breast cancer is a hormonally-sensitive tumour. See [2 CONTRAINDICATIONS](#).

Increasing age and a strong family history are the most significant risk factors for the development of breast cancer. Other established risk factors include obesity, nulliparity and late age at first full-term pregnancy. The identified groups of women that may be at increased risk of developing breast cancer before menopause are long-term users of oral contraceptives (more than eight years) and starters at early age. In a few women, the use of oral contraceptives may accelerate the growth of an existing but undiagnosed breast cancer. Since any potential increased risk related to oral contraceptive use is small, there is no reason to change prescribing habits at present.

Women receiving oral contraceptives should be instructed in self-examination of their breasts. Their physicians should be notified whenever any masses are detected. A yearly clinical breast examination is also recommended because, if a breast cancer should develop, estrogen containing drugs may cause a rapid progression.

Cervical cancer:

The most important risk factor for cervical cancer is persistent human papilloma virus (HPV) infection. Some epidemiological studies have indicated that long-term use of COCs may further contribute to this increased risk but there continues to be controversy about the extent to which this finding is attributable to the confounding effects, e.g., cervical screening and sexual behaviour including use of barrier contraceptives.

Hepatocellular carcinoma:

Hepatocellular carcinoma may be associated with oral contraceptives. The risk appears to increase with duration of hormonal contraceptive use (> 8 years). However, the attributable risk (the excess incidence) of liver cancers in oral contraceptive users is extremely small (< 1

case/million users). A liver tumor should be considered in the differential diagnosis when severe upper abdominal pain, liver enlargement or signs of intra-abdominal hemorrhage occur in women taking COCs. See [Hepatic nodules](#).

Cardiovascular

Predisposing factors for coronary artery disease:

Cigarette smoking increases the risk of serious cardiovascular events and mortality. Birth control pills increase this risk, particularly in women over 35 years of age, and with the number of cigarettes smoked. Convincing data are available to support an upper age limit of 35 years for oral contraceptive use by women who smoke.

Other women who are independently at high risk for cardiovascular disease include those with diabetes, hypertension, abnormal lipid profile, obesity or a family history of these. Whether oral contraceptives accentuate this risk is unclear.

In low risk, non-smoking women of any age, the benefits of oral contraceptive use outweigh the possible cardiovascular risks associated with low dose formulations. Consequently, oral contraceptives may be prescribed for these women up to the age of menopause.

Hypertension:

COC use is contraindicated in women with uncontrolled hypertension. See [2 CONTRAINDICATIONS](#).

Patients with essential hypertension whose blood pressure is well-controlled may be given hormonal contraceptives but only under close supervision. If a significant elevation of blood pressure in previously normotensive or hypertensive subjects occurs at any time during the administration of the drug, cessation of medication is necessary.

Driving and Operating Machinery

No studies on the effects of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets on the ability to drive or use machines have been performed.

Endocrine and Metabolism

Diabetes:

Current low-dose oral contraceptives exert minimal impact on glucose metabolism. Diabetic patients, or those with a family history of diabetes, should be observed closely to detect any worsening of carbohydrate metabolism. Patients predisposed to diabetes who can be kept under close supervision may be given oral contraceptives. Young diabetic patients whose disease is of recent origin, well- controlled, and not associated with hypertension or other signs of vascular disease such as ocular fundal changes, should be monitored more frequently while using oral contraceptives.

Lipid and other metabolic effects:

A small proportion of women will have adverse lipid changes while on oral contraceptives. Alternative contraception should be used in women with uncontrolled dyslipidemias. See [2 CONTRAINDICATIONS](#). Elevations of plasma triglycerides may lead to pancreatitis and other

complications.

Gastrointestinal

Published epidemiological studies indicate a possible association of COC use and the development of Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, although this has not been firmly established.

Reduced efficacy:

The efficacy of COCs may be reduced in the event of missed tablets, gastrointestinal disturbances or concomitant medication. See [9 DRUG INTERACTIONS](#).

Genitourinary

Vaginal bleeding:

Unscheduled (breakthrough or intra-cycle) bleeding and/or spotting (IB/S) sometimes occur in patients on COCs, especially during the first three months of use. In the pivotal trial for ethinyl estradiol tablets/ norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets, a total of 1,257 women (85.9%) experienced IB/S at some time during Cycles 2 to 13 of this study. The incidence of IB/S was highest during Cycle 2 (53%) and lowest at Cycle 13 (36%). The mean number of days per cycle of IB/S decreased from 3.2 days in Cycle 2 to 1.8 days during Cycle 13. See [Bleeding Profile](#).

Persistent irregular vaginal bleeding requires assessment to exclude underlying pathology.

Scheduled (withdrawal) bleeding and/or spotting remained fairly constant over the one year study, with an average of less than 2 days per cycle when including all women and all cycles.

Fibroids:

Patients with fibroids (leiomyomata) should be carefully observed. Sudden enlargement, pain, or tenderness requires discontinuation of the use of oral contraceptives.

Hematologic

Epidemiological studies have suggested an association between the use of COCs and an increased risk of arterial and venous thrombotic and thromboembolic diseases such as myocardial infarction, deep venous thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, and of cerebrovascular accidents.

Venous thromboembolism (VTE):

The use of any combined oral contraceptive carries an increased risk of VTE compared with no use. The excess risk of VTE is highest during the first year a woman ever uses a combined oral contraceptive or restarts (following a 4-week or greater pill-free interval) the same or a different COC. Data from a large, prospective 3-armed cohort study suggest that this increased risk is mainly present during the first 3 months. VTE is fatal in 1 to 2% of cases.

A large, prospective 3-armed cohort study has shown that the frequency of VTE diagnosis ranges from about 8 to 10 per 10,000 woman-years in users of oral contraceptives with low

estrogen content (< 50 mcg ethinyl estradiol). The most recent data suggest that the frequency of VTE diagnosis is approximately 4.4 per 10,000 woman-years in nonpregnant, non-COC users and ranges from 20 to 30 per 10,000 women-years in pregnant women or postpartum.

Overall the risk for VTE in users of COCs with low estrogen content (< 50 mcg ethinyl estradiol) is 2- to 3-fold higher than for nonusers of COCs who are not pregnant and remains lower than the risk associated with pregnancy and delivery.

The risk of VTE with COCs has been shown to be related to the estrogen dose, as risk has decreased as doses have decreased from 100 to 50 to 30 mcg. Whether doses as low as 10 mcg are further protective is unknown. ELFY provides a daily dose of ethinyl estradiol of 10 mcg, for 26 of 28 days each cycle.

Extremely rarely, thrombosis has been reported to occur in other blood vessels (e.g., hepatic, mesenteric, renal, cerebral, or retinal veins and arteries) in COC users. There is no consensus as to whether the occurrence of these events is associated with the use of COCs.

Arterial thromboembolism (ATE):

The risk for ATE in users of oral contraceptives with < 50 mcg ethinyl estradiol ranges from about 1 to 3 cases per 10,000 woman-years. An ATE can include cerebrovascular accident, vascular occlusion, or myocardial infarction.

Arterial thromboembolic events may be fatal.

Other risk factors for venous or arterial thromboembolism or of a cerebrovascular accident:

Other generalized risk factors for venous or arterial thromboembolism include but are not limited to age, severe obesity (body mass index > 30 kg/m²), a personal history, a positive family history (the occurrence of VTE/ATE in a direct relative at a relatively early age may indicate genetic predisposition) and systemic lupus erythematosus. If a hereditary or acquired predisposition for venous or arterial thromboembolism is suspected, the woman should be referred to a specialist for advice before deciding on any COC use. The risk of VTE/ATE may be temporarily increased with prolonged immobilization, major surgery, or trauma. In these situations, it is advisable to discontinue COC use (in the case of elective surgery at least four weeks in advance) and not to resume COC use until two weeks after complete remobilization. Also, patients with varicose veins and leg cast should be closely supervised. Other risk factors may include smoking (with heavier smoking and increasing age, the risk further increases, especially in women over 35 years of age), dyslipoproteinemia, hypertension, migraine, valvular heart disease, and atrial fibrillation.

Biochemical factors that may be indicative of hereditary or acquired predisposition for venous or arterial thrombosis include Factor V Leiden mutation and APC- resistance, antithrombin-III-deficiency, protein C deficiency, protein S deficiency, hyperhomocysteinemia (e.g., due to MTHFR C677T, A1298 mutations), prothrombin mutation G20210A, and antiphospholipid-antibodies (anticardiolipin antibodies, lupus anticoagulant).

When considering risk/benefit, the physician should take into account that adequate treatment of a condition may reduce the associated risk of thrombosis and that the risk associated with pregnancy is higher than that associated with COCs containing < 0.05 mg

ethinyl estradiol).

Hepatic/Biliary/Pancreatic

Acute or chronic disturbances of liver function may necessitate the discontinuation of COC use until markers of liver function return to normal.

Hepatitis C:

ELFY must be discontinued prior to starting therapy with the HCV combination drug regimen ombitasvir, paritaprevir, ritonavir, with or without dasabuvir. See [2 CONTRAINDICATIONS](#) and [9 DRUG INTERACTIONS](#). During clinical trials with ombitasvir, paritaprevir, ritonavir, with or without dasabuvir, alanine transaminase (ALT) elevations 5 to > 20 times the upper limit of normal were significantly more frequent in healthy female subjects and HCV infected women using ethinyl estradiol-containing medications such as COCs. Physicians are advised to consult the labelling of concurrently-used HCV combination drug regimen ombitasvir, paritaprevir, ritonavir with or without dasabuvir to obtain further information about restarting ELFY.

Jaundice:

Patients who have had jaundice should be given oral contraceptives only with great care and under close observation. Oral contraceptive-related cholestasis has been described in women with a history of pregnancy-related cholestasis. Women with a history of cholestasis may have the condition recur with subsequent hormonal contraceptive use. The development of severe generalized pruritus or icterus requires that the medication be withdrawn until the problem is resolved.

If a patient develops jaundice that proves to be cholestatic in type, the use of oral contraceptives should not be resumed. In patients taking hormonal contraceptives, changes in the composition of the bile may occur and an increased incidence of gallstones has been reported.

Gallbladder disease:

Patients taking oral contraceptives have a greater risk of developing gallbladder disease requiring surgery within the first year of use. The risk may double after four or five years.

Hepatic nodules:

Hepatic nodules (adenoma and focal nodular hyperplasia) have been reported, particularly in long-term users of oral contraceptives. Although these lesions are extremely rare, they have caused fatal intra- abdominal hemorrhage and should be considered in women presenting with an abdominal mass, acute abdominal pain, or evidence of intra-abdominal bleeding.

Immune

Angioedema:

Exogenous estrogens may induce or exacerbate symptoms of angioedema, in particular in women with hereditary angioedema.

Monitoring and Laboratory Tests

Before oral contraceptives are used, a thorough history and physical examination should be performed, including a blood pressure determination and the family case history carefully noted. In addition, disturbances of the clotting system must be ruled out if any members of the family have suffered from thromboembolic diseases (e.g., deep vein thrombosis, stroke, myocardial infarction) at a young age.

Breasts, liver, extremities and pelvic organs should be examined and a Papanicolaou (PAP) smear should be taken if the patient has been sexually active.

The first follow-up visit should be done three months after oral contraceptives are prescribed. Thereafter, examinations should be performed at least once a year or more frequently if indicated. At each annual visit, examination should include those procedures that were done at the initial visit as outlined above or per recommendations of the Canadian Task Force on the Periodic Health Examination.

Neurologic

Migraine and headache:

The onset or exacerbation of migraine or the development of headache of a new pattern that is recurrent, persistent or severe, requires discontinuation of hormonal contraceptives and evaluation of the cause. Women with migraine headaches who take oral contraceptives may be at increased risk of stroke. See [2 CONTRAINDICATIONS](#).

Ophthalmologic

Ocular disease:

Patients who are pregnant or are taking oral contraceptives, may experience corneal edema that may cause visual disturbances and changes in tolerance to contact lenses, especially of the rigid type. Soft contact lenses usually do not cause disturbances. If visual changes or alterations in tolerance to contact lenses occur, temporary or permanent cessation of wear may be advised.

Ocular lesions:

With use of COCs, there have been reports of retinal vascular thrombosis which may lead to partial or complete loss of vision. If there are signs or symptoms such as visual changes, onset of proptosis or diplopia, papilledema, or retinal vascular lesions, ELFY should be discontinued and the cause immediately evaluated.

Peri-Operative Considerations

There is an increased risk of thromboembolic complications in oral contraceptive users after major surgery. If feasible, oral contraceptives should be discontinued and an alternative method substituted at least one month prior to **MAJOR** elective surgery. Oral contraceptives should not be resumed until the first menstrual period after hospital discharge following surgery.

Psychiatric

Patients with a history of emotional disturbances, especially the depressive type, may be more prone to have a recurrence of depression while taking oral contraceptives. In cases of a serious recurrence, a trial of an alternate method of contraception should be made which may help to clarify the possible relationship. Women with premenstrual syndrome may have a varied response to oral contraceptives, ranging from symptomatic improvement to worsening of the condition.

Renal

Fluid retention:

Hormonal contraceptives may cause some degree of fluid retention. They should be prescribed with caution, and only with careful monitoring in patients with conditions which might be aggravated by fluid retention.

Reproductive Health

Return to fertility:

After discontinuing oral contraceptive therapy, the patient should delay pregnancy until at least one normal spontaneous cycle has occurred in order to date the pregnancy. An alternate contraceptive method should be used during this time.

Amenorrhea:

Women on ELFY may not get a period each month. In the clinical trial with ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets, the incidence of amenorrhea increased from 32% in Cycle 1 to 49% by Cycle 13. See [Bleeding Profile](#). If ELFY has been taken according to directions, it is unlikely that the woman is pregnant. However, if ELFY has not been taken according to directions prior to the first missed withdrawal bleed, or if two withdrawal bleeds are missed, pregnancy must be ruled out before ELFY use is continued.

Women having a history of oligomenorrhea, secondary amenorrhea, or irregular cycles may remain anovulatory or become amenorrheic following discontinuation of estrogen-progestin combination therapy.

Amenorrhea, especially if associated with breast secretion that continues for 6 months or more after withdrawal warrants a careful assessment of hypothalamic-pituitary function.

Skin

Chloasma may occasionally occur with use of COCs, especially in women with a history of chloasma gravidarum. Women with a tendency to chloasma should avoid exposure to the sun or ultraviolet radiation while taking COCs. Chloasma is often not fully reversible.

7.1 Special Populations

7.1.1 Pregnant Women

Oral contraceptives should not be taken by pregnant women. If pregnancy occurs during

treatment with ELFY, further intake must be stopped. However, if conception accidentally occurs while taking the pill, there is no conclusive evidence that the estrogen and progestin contained in the oral contraceptive will damage the developing child.

7.1.2 Breastfeeding

In breastfeeding women, the use of oral contraceptives results in the hormonal components being excreted in breast milk and may reduce its quantity and quality. If the use of oral contraceptives is initiated after the establishment of lactation, there does not appear to be any effect on the quantity and quality of the milk. There is no evidence that low-dose oral contraceptives are harmful to the nursing infant.

If possible, the nursing mother should be advised not to use oral contraceptives but to use other forms of contraception until she has completely weaned her child. There have been no formal studies of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets in nursing women.

7.1.3 Pediatrics

Pediatrics (< 18 years): The safety and efficacy of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets have not been established in women under the age of 18 years. Use of this product before menarche is not indicated.

7.1.4 Geriatrics

ELFY is not indicated for use in postmenopausal women.

7.1.5 Body Mass Index (BMI)

The safety and efficacy of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets in women with a body mass index (BMI) > 35 kg/m² has not been evaluated.

8 ADVERSE REACTIONS

8.1 Adverse Reaction Overview

An increased risk of the following serious adverse reactions has been associated with the use of oral contraceptives:

- arterial and venous thromboembolism
- being diagnosed with breast cancer
- benign and malignant hepatic tumours
- cerebral hemorrhage
- cerebral thrombosis
- congenital anomalies
- gallbladder disease
- hypertension

- mesenteric thrombosis
- myocardial infarction
- neuro-ocular lesions (e.g., retinal thrombosis)
- pulmonary embolism
- thrombophlebitis

The following adverse reactions also have been reported in patients receiving oral contraceptives:

Nausea and vomiting, usually the most common adverse reaction, occurs in approximately 10% or fewer of patients during the first cycle. The following other reactions, as a general rule, are seen less frequently or only occasionally:

Blood and lymphatic system disorders: hemolytic uremic syndrome

Ear and labyrinth disorders: auditory disturbances, otosclerosis-related hearing loss¹

Eye disorders: cataracts, change in corneal curvature (steepening), intolerance to contact lenses, retinal thrombosis

Gastrointestinal disorders: abdominal pain, Crohn's disease¹, diarrhea, gastrointestinal symptoms (such as abdominal cramps and bloating), pancreatitis, ulcerative colitis¹

General disorders and administration site conditions: edema

Hepatobiliary disorders: cholestatic jaundice, gallstone formation¹, liver function disturbances¹

Immune system disorders: hypersensitivity

Infections and infestations: rhinitis, vaginal candidiasis, vaginitis

Investigations: change in weight (increase or decrease), reduced tolerance to carbohydrates

Metabolism and nutrition disorders: changes in appetite, hypertriglyceridemia (increased risk of pancreatitis when using COCs)¹, porphyria

Musculoskeletal and connective tissue disorders: systemic lupus erythematosus¹

Neoplasms benign, malignant and unspecified (including cysts and polyps): increase in size of uterine leiomyomata

Nervous system disorders: chorea, dizziness, headache, migraine, optic neuritis, Sydenham's chorea¹

Psychiatric disorders: changes in libido, mental depression, nervousness

Renal and urinary disorders: cystitis-like syndrome, impaired renal function

Reproductive system and breast disorders: amenorrhea during and after treatment, breakthrough bleeding, breast changes including tenderness, enlargement, and secretion, change in menstrual flow, dysmenorrhea, endocervical hyperplasia, possible diminution in lactation when given immediately post-partum, premenstrual-like syndrome, spotting, temporary infertility after discontinuance of treatment, vaginal discharge

Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders: chloasma or melasma which may persist, loss of scalp hair, hirsutism, erythema multiforme, erythema nodosum, hemorrhagic eruption, herpes gestationis¹, pruritis related to cholestasis¹, rash (allergic), urticaria

Vascular disorders: hypertension¹, Raynaud's phenomenon

1. Occurrence or deterioration of conditions for which association with COC use is not conclusive.

8.2 Clinical Trial Adverse Reactions

Clinical trials are conducted under very specific conditions. The adverse reaction rates observed in the clinical trials; therefore, may not reflect the rates observed in practice and should not be compared to the rates in the clinical trials of another drug. Adverse drug reaction information from clinical trials is useful for identifying drug-related adverse events and approximate rates of adverse drug reactions in real-world use.

A multicenter phase 3 clinical trial evaluated the safety and efficacy of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets for pregnancy prevention. The study was a one year, open-label, single-arm, uncontrolled study. A total of 1,660 women aged 18 to 45 were enrolled and took at least one dose of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets.

A list of adverse reactions experienced by $\geq 1\%$ of the subjects is listed in [Table 2](#).

Table 2 – Treatment-related Adverse Reactions Reported in $\geq 1\%$ of Subjects

	ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets
	N = 1660 (%)
Nervous system disorders	
Headache	79 (4.8)
Gastrointestinal disorders	
Nausea	53 (3.2)
Reproductive system and breast disorders	
Metrorrhagia	54 (3.3)
Breast tenderness	50 (3.0)
Dysmenorrhea	42 (2.5)
Metabolism & nutrition disorders	
Weight fluctuation	48 (2.9)
Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders	
Acne	35 (2.1)
Psychiatric disorders	
Mood swings	23 (1.4)

The mean weight gain on ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets was 1.7 lb (SD ± 9.8 lb).

Serious Adverse Events leading to discontinuation included: deep vein thrombosis, ovarian vein thrombosis and cholecystitis.

Adverse Events Leading to Study Discontinuation: 10.7% of the women discontinued from the clinical trial due to an adverse event. Adverse events occurring in ≥ 1% of subjects leading to discontinuation of treatment were, in decreasing order: menstrual irregularities (including metrorrhagia, irregular menstruation, menorrhagia and vaginal hemorrhage) (4%), headache/migraine (1%), mood disorder (including mood swings, depression, anxiety) (1%), and weight fluctuation (1%). Less than 1% of subjects discontinued because of amenorrhea.

8.2.1 Clinical Trial Adverse Reactions – Pediatrics

The safety and efficacy of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets have not been established in women under the age of 18 years.

8.3 Less Common Clinical Trial Adverse Reactions

Rare adverse reactions (< 1%) which were observed in clinical trials and deemed to be at least possibly related to ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets are as follows:

Eye disorders: vision blurred, contact lens intolerance, dry eye

Gastrointestinal disorders: abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal distension, gastroesophageal reflux disease, constipation, dyspepsia, stomach discomfort, abdominal discomfort

General disorders and administration site conditions: fatigue, irritability, peripheral edema, swelling, edema, drug intolerance

Hepatobiliary disorders: cholecystitis, cholelithiasis

Investigations: abnormal cervical smear, abnormal lab test, blood pressure increased, aspartate serum transaminase (AST) increased, blood cholesterol increased

Infections and infestations: HPV cervicitis, fungal infection, bronchitis

Metabolism and nutrition disorders: hypercholesterolemia, hypertriglyceridemia, increased appetite, fluid retention, food craving, impaired glucose tolerance, lack of satiety

Musculoskeletal and connective tissue disorders: pain in extremity, muscle spasms

Nervous system disorders: migraine, dizziness, tension headache, lethargy, loss of consciousness, somnolence

Psychiatric disorders: anxiety, depression, insomnia, decreased libido, mood altered, affect liability, tearfulness, suicidal ideation

Renal and urinary disorders: urinary tract infection

Reproductive system and breast disorders: bacterial vaginitis, vulvovaginal mycotic infection, amenorrhea, irregular menstruation, ovarian cyst, vaginal candidiasis, vaginal discharge, breast pain, menorrhagia, pelvic pain, breast mass, vaginal inflammation, fibrocystic breast disease, premenstrual syndrome, dyspareunia, vulvovaginal dryness, breast cyst, breast discharge, breast hypertrophy, vaginal hemorrhage, coital bleeding, vaginal pain, adnexa uteri pain, breast atrophy, breast swelling, cervical discharge, dysfunctional uterine bleeding, nipple pain

Respiratory, thoracic and mediastinal disorders: upper respiratory tract infection, alveolar proteinosis

Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders: rash, alopecia, urticaria, hyperhidrosis, night sweats, eczema, pruritus, generalized rash, hair texture abnormal, pigmentation disorder, lip pigmentation, generalized pruritis

Vascular disorders: hypertension, hot flush, deep vein thrombosis, hemorrhage, venous thrombosis

8.3.1 Less Common Clinical Trial Adverse Reactions – Pediatrics

The safety and efficacy of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets have not been established in women under the age of 18 years.

8.4 Abnormal Laboratory Findings: Hematologic, Clinical Chemistry and Other Quantitative Data

Clinical Trial Findings

In the pivotal trial, a total of 80 abnormal laboratory results (not including positive pregnancy tests) in 31 subjects in the All Treated population were considered clinically significant, consisting mostly of elevated cholesterol and triglycerides; moderately elevated AST, ALT and gamma glutamine transaminase (GGT). In most of these cases values elevated at the end of the study were actually lower than the initial values. Slightly reduced hemoglobin and hematocrit were also common.

8.5 Post-Market Adverse Reactions

The following serious adverse events have been reported in users of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets in the post marketing period. These adverse events are compiled from spontaneous reports and are listed regardless of frequency and whether or not a causal relationship with ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets has been established.

Congenital, familial and genetic disorders: heart disease (congenital)

General disorders and administration site conditions: chest pain

Hepatobiliary disorders: gallbladder disorder, liver disorder

Musculoskeletal and connective tissue disorders: muscular weakness

Neoplasms benign, malignant and unspecified (including cysts and polyps): benign breast neoplasm

Nervous system disorders: cerebrovascular accident, convulsion, epilepsy, grand mal convulsion, hypoaesthesia, intracranial aneurysm, paralysis

Pregnancy, puerperium and perinatal conditions: abortion spontaneous, premature delivery

Psychiatric disorders: suicidal ideation

Renal and urinary disorders: renal infarct

Reproductive system and breast disorders: menorrhagia

Respiratory, thoracic and mediastinal disorders: pulmonary embolism

Vascular disorders: deep vein thrombosis, thrombosis

9 DRUG INTERACTIONS

9.2 Drug Interactions Overview

The concurrent administration of oral contraceptives with other drugs may lead to breakthrough bleeding and/or may result in an altered response to either agent (see [Table 3](#) and [Table 4](#)). Reduced effectiveness of the oral contraceptive, should it occur, is more likely with the low-dose formulations. It is important to ascertain all drugs that a patient is taking, both prescription and non-prescription, before oral contraceptives are prescribed.

No formal drug-drug interaction studies were conducted with ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets.

9.3 Drug-Behavioural Interactions

No studies on the effects of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets on the ability to drive or use machines have been performed.

9.4 Drug-Drug Interactions

Table 3 – Drugs which may decrease the efficacy of oral contraceptives

Class of Compound	Drug(s)	Proposed Mechanism	Suggested Management
Antacids		Decreased intestinal absorption of progestins.	Dose two hours apart.
Antibiotics	Ampicillin Cotrimoxazole Penicillin	Enterohepatic circulation disturbance, intestinal hurry.	For short course, use additional method or use another drug. For long course, use another method.
	Rifabutin Rifampin	Increased metabolism of progestins. Suspected acceleration of estrogen metabolism.	Use another method.

Class of Compound	Drug(s)	Proposed Mechanism	Suggested Management
	Chloramphenicol Metronidazole Neomycin Nitrofurantoin Sulfonamides Tetracyclines	Induction of hepatic microsomal enzymes. Also disturbance of enterohepatic circulation.	For short course, use additional method or use another drug. For long course, use another method.
	Troleandomycin	May retard metabolism of oral contraceptives, increasing the risk of cholestatic jaundice.	
Anticonvulsants	Carbamazepine Ethosuximide Felbamate Lamotrigine Oxcarbazepine Phenobarbital Phenytoin Primidone Topiramate	Induction of hepatic microsomal enzymes. Rapid metabolism of estrogen and increased binding of progestin and ethinyl estradiol to SHBG.	Use higher dose oral contraceptives (50 mcg ethinyl estradiol), another drug or another method.
Antifungals	Griseofulvin	Stimulation of hepatic metabolism of contraceptive steroids may occur.	Use another method.
Cholesterol Lowering Agents	Clofibrate	Reduces elevated serum triglycerides and cholesterol; this reduces oral contraceptive efficacy.	Use another method.
HCV Protease Inhibitors	Telaprevir	Uncertain, but may be due to an effect on GI transporters, leading to a decrease in the AUC of ethinyl estradiol.	Exposure to ethinyl estradiol was decreased when co-administered with telaprevir. Additional methods of non-hormonal contraception should be used when hormonal contraceptives are co-administered with telaprevir.

Class of Compound	Drug(s)	Proposed Mechanism	Suggested Management
HIV Protease Inhibitors	Ritonavir	Induction of hepatic microsomal enzymes.	Use another drug or another method.
Non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors	Nevirapine	Induction of hepatic microsomal enzymes.	Use another drug or another method.
Sedatives and Hypnotics	Barbiturates Benzodiazepines Chloral hydrate Glutethimide Meprobamate	Induction of hepatic microsomal enzymes.	For short course, use additional method or another drug. For long course, use another method or higher dose oral contraceptives.
Other Drugs	Antihistamines Analgesics Antimigraine preparations Phenylbutazone preparations Vitamin E	Reduced oral contraceptive efficacy has been reported. Remains to be confirmed.	
	Bosentan	Induction of hepatic microsomal enzymes.	Consider switching to a non-hormonal contraceptive method or adding a barrier method to oral contraceptive therapy

Table 4 – Modification of other drug action by oral contraceptives

Class of Compound	Drug	Proposed Mechanism	Suggested Management
Alcohol		Possible increased levels of ethanol or acetaldehyde.	Use with caution.
Alpha-II adrenoreceptor agents	Clonidine	Sedation effect increased.	Use with caution.

Class of Compound	Drug	Proposed Mechanism	Suggested Management
Anticoagulants	All	Oral contraceptives increase clotting factors, decrease efficacy. However, oral contraceptives may potentiate action in some patients.	Use another method.
Anticonvulsants	All	Estrogens may increase risk of seizures.	Use another method.
	Lamotrigine	Decreased lamotrigine levels, may lead to breakthrough seizures.	Use another method.
Antidiabetic drugs	Oral hypoglycemics and insulin	Oral contraceptives may impair glucose tolerance and increase blood glucose.	Use low-dose estrogen and progestin oral contraceptive or another method. Monitor blood glucose.
Antihypertensive agents	Guanethidine and methyldopa	Estrogen component causes sodium retention, progestin has no effect.	Use low-dose estrogen oral contraceptive or use another method.
	Beta blockers	Increased drug effect (decreased metabolism).	Adjust dose of drug if necessary. Monitor cardiovascular status.
Antipyretics	Acetaminophen	Increased metabolism and renal clearance.	Dose of drug may have to be increased.
	Antipyrine	Impaired metabolism.	Decrease dose of drug.
	ASA	Effects of ASA may be decreased by the short-term use of oral contraceptives.	Patients on chronic ASA therapy may require an increase in ASA dosage.
Aminocaproic acid		Theoretically, a hypercoagulable state may occur because oral contraceptives augment clotting factors.	Avoid concomitant use.

Class of Compound	Drug	Proposed Mechanism	Suggested Management
Betamimetic agents	Isoproterenol	Estrogen causes decreased response to these drugs.	Adjust dose of drug as necessary. Discontinuing oral contraceptives can result in excessive drug activity.
Caffeine		The actions of caffeine may be enhanced as oral contraceptives may impair the hepatic metabolism of caffeine.	Use with caution.
Cholesterol lowering agents	Clofibrate	Their action may be antagonized by oral contraceptives. Oral contraceptives may also increase metabolism of clofibrate.	May need to increase dose of clofibrate.
Corticosteroids	Prednisone	Markedly increased serum levels.	Possible need for decrease in dose.
Cyclosporine		May lead to an increase in cyclosporine levels and hepatotoxicity.	Monitor hepatic function. The cyclosporine dose may have to be decreased.
Folic acid		Oral contraceptives have been reported to impair folate metabolism.	May need to increase dietary intake, or supplement.
Meperidine		Possible increased analgesia and CNS depression due to decreased metabolism of meperidine.	Use combination with caution.
Phenothiazine tranquilizers	All phenothiazines, reserpine and similar drugs	Estrogen potentiates the hyperprolactinemia effect of these drugs.	Use other drugs or lower dose oral contraceptives. If galactorrhea or hyperprolactinemia occurs, use other method.
Sedatives and hypnotics	Chlordiazepoxide Lorazepam Oxazepam Diazepam	Increased effect (increased metabolism).	Use with caution.

Class of Compound	Drug	Proposed Mechanism	Suggested Management
Theophylline	All	Decreased oxidation, leading to possible toxicity.	Use with caution. Monitor theophylline levels.
Tricyclic antidepressants	Clomipramine (possibly others)	Increased side effects: e.g., depression	Use with caution.
Vitamin B12		Oral contraceptives have been reported to reduce serum levels of Vitamin B12	May need to increase dietary intake, or supplement.

Several of the anti-HIV protease inhibitors (e.g., ritonavir) and non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (e.g., nevirapine) have been studied with coadministration of oral combination hormonal contraceptives; significant changes (increase and decrease) in the mean AUC of the estrogen and progestin and the potential to affect hepatic metabolism have been noted in some cases. The efficacy and safety of oral contraceptive products may be affected. Healthcare providers should refer to the label of the individual anti-HIV protease inhibitors for further drug-drug interaction information.

Contraindicated co-administration

Ombitasvir, paritaprevir, ritonavir, with or without dasabuvir (direct-acting antiviral medicinal products) have been shown to be associated with increases in ALT levels 5 to > 20 times the upper limit of normal in healthy female subjects and HCV infected women using ethinyl estradiol-containing medications such as COCs. See [2 CONTRAINDICATIONS](#) and [Hepatic/Biliary/Pancreatic](#).

9.5 Drug-Food Interactions

ELFY tablets may be administered without regard to meals.

Administration of food with a single-dose of a norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol combination tablet did not affect the maximum concentration of norethindrone and increased the extent of absorption by 24%; it decreased the maximum concentration of ethinyl estradiol by 23% and did not affect the extent of absorption.

Administration of food with a single-dose of a ethinyl estradiol alone tablet decreased the maximum concentration of ethinyl estradiol by 31% and did not affect the extent of absorption

9.6 Drug-Herb Interactions

Herbal products containing St. John's wort (*hypericum perforatum*) may induce hepatic enzymes (cytochrome P450) and p-glycoprotein transporter and may reduce the effectiveness

of contraceptive steroids. This may also result in breakthrough bleeding.

9.7 Drug-Laboratory Test Interactions

Results of laboratory tests should be interpreted with the knowledge that the patient is taking an oral contraceptive. The following laboratory tests are modified:

Liver Function Tests

AST - variously reported elevations

ALT and GGT - slightly elevated

Coagulation Tests

Minimal elevation of test values reported for such parameters as prothrombin and factors VII, VIII, IX, and X.

Thyroid Function Tests

Protein binding of thyroxine is increased as indicated by increased total serum thyroxine concentrations and decreased T3 resin uptake.

Lipoproteins

Small changes of unproven clinical significance may occur in lipoprotein cholesterol fractions.

Gonadotropins

LH and FSH levels are suppressed by the use of oral contraceptives. Wait 2 weeks after discontinuing the use of oral contraceptives before measurements are made.

Glucose Tolerance

Oral glucose tolerance remained unchanged or was slightly decreased.

Tissue Specimens

Pathologists should be advised of oral contraceptive therapy when specimens obtained from surgical procedures and PAP smears are submitted for examination.

10 CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY

10.1 Mechanism of Action

Like other combination oral contraceptives, ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets acts by suppression of gonadotropins. These actions include: suppression of follicular development and inhibition of ovulation, other alterations include changes in the cervical mucus (which increase the difficulty of sperm entry into the uterus) and the endometrium (which reduce the likelihood of implantation).

Detailed Pharmacology

See [10.1 Mechanism of Action](#) for additional information.

Both norethindrone (NE) and ethinyl estradiol (EE) have been subject to extensive biological examination over the past four decades. Norethindrone, using the Clauberg assay with rabbits, has been variously estimated to possess an oral progestational activity at least 10 times that of injected progesterone. Only slight estrogenic activity along with some androgenic activity (9% that of methyl testosterone) has been evident. Ethinyl estradiol has been demonstrated to be slightly more active than 17R-estradiol using the vaginal cornification test in rats.

Norethindrone/ethinyl estradiol, in the ratio of 1.0/0.035, fed to female rats for 22 days at a daily dose of 0.15 mg/kg was effective in reducing the littering activity during a period of 15 days cohabitation with fertile males. Subsequent to the dosing period, these females regained their fertility.

Estrogenic, progestational and antigonadotropic characteristics are revealed for the endocrine profile of this combination. In female rats, a uterotrophic effect is clearly demonstrated for a range of 0.1 to 0.4 mcg, total oral dose. In rabbits a McPhail index of 2.6 is recorded at a total oral dose of 0.8 mg of this progestin/estrogen combination. At a total dose of 450 mcg (based on EE content) compensatory ovarian hypertrophy is completely inhibited in hemicastrate female rats.

10.2 Pharmacodynamics

No pharmacodynamic studies were conducted with ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets.

10.3 Pharmacokinetics

Table 5 – Summary of Ethinyl Estradiol Tablets / Norethindrone Acetate and Ethinyl Estradiol Tablets Pharmacokinetic Parameters in Healthy Female Volunteers (n = 15)

Regimen	Study Day	Analyte	Arithmetic Mean ¹ (%CV) by Pharmacokinetic Parameter				
			C _{max} (pg/mL)	t _{max} (h)	AUC _{0-24h} (pg/mL·h)	C _{min} (pg/mL)	C _{avg} (pg/mL)
Single Dose Norethindrone Acetate and Ethinyl Estradiol combination tablet ³	1	NE	7360 (21)	1.7 (1.3-6.0)	33280 (33)	--	--
		EE	50.9 (27)	1.3 (1.0-6.0)	389.9 (27)	--	--
		SHBG	--	--	--	54.8 (33) ²	--
Multiple Dose Norethindrone Acetate and	24	NE	13900 (34)	1.3 (0.7–3.0)	84160 (41)	917 (84)	3510 (41)
		EE	71.3 (33)	1.3 (0.3–2.0)	621.3 (41)	10.0 (92)	25.9 (41)

Regimen	Study Day	Analyte	Arithmetic Mean ¹ (%CV) by Pharmacokinetic Parameter				
			C _{max} (pg/mL)	t _{max} (h)	AUC _{0-24h} (pg/mL·h)	C _{min} (pg/mL)	C _{avg} (pg/mL)
Ethinyl Estradiol Combination tablet ⁴ x 24 days		SHBG	--	--	--	109 (38)	--
Multiple Dose Norethindrone Acetate and Ethinyl Estradiol combination tablet x 24 days and EE alone tablet ⁴ x 2 days	26	EE	49.9 (34)	1.3 (0.7–3.0)	403.6 (50)	--	--

EE: ethinyl estradiol; NE: norethindrone; SHBG = Sex hormone binding globulin (nmol/L)
C_{max} = Maximum plasma concentration (pg/mL); t_{max} = Time of C_{max} (h); AUC_{0-24h} = Area under plasma concentration versus time curve from 0 to 24 hours (pg·h/mL); C_{min} = Minimum plasma concentration (pg/mL); C_{avg} = Average plasma concentration = AUC_{0-24 h}/24 (pg/mL);
%CV = Coefficient of Variation (%);
1. The median (range) is reported for t_{max}
2. The C_{min} concentration reported for SHBG is the pre-dose concentration
3. Ethinyl estradiol / Norethindrone acetate and Ethinyl estradiol combination tablets contain 1 mg norethindrone acetate and 10 mcg ethinyl estradiol
4. Ethinyl estradiol / Norethindrone acetate and Ethinyl estradiol EE alone tablets contain 10 mcg ethinyl estradiol

Absorption

Norethindrone acetate is completely and rapidly deacetylated to norethindrone after oral administration, and the disposition of norethindrone acetate is indistinguishable from that of orally administered norethindrone. Norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol are rapidly absorbed from ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets, with maximum plasma concentrations of norethindrone and ethinyl estradiol generally occurring 1 to 2 hours post-dose. Both are subject to first-pass metabolism after oral dosing, resulting in an absolute bioavailability of approximately 64% for norethindrone and 55% for ethinyl estradiol.

The rate of norethindrone and ethinyl estradiol absorption from ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets containing the combination of 1 mg norethindrone acetate and 10 mcg ethinyl estradiol is slower than that from a norethindrone suspension/ethinyl estradiol solution, but the extent of absorption is equivalent.

Ethinyl estradiol bioavailability from ethinyl estradiol tablets containing 10 mcg ethinyl estradiol alone is equivalent to that from an ethinyl estradiol solution.

The plasma norethindrone and ethinyl estradiol pharmacokinetic profiles and serum sex hormone binding globulin (SHBG) concentrations following multiple-dose administration of

ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets were characterized in 15 healthy female volunteers. The mean plasma concentrations are shown below ([Figure 1](#) and [Figure 2](#)), and pharmacokinetic parameters are found in [Table 5](#).

Ethinyl estradiol and norethindrone C_{max} values increase by a factor of 1.4 and 1.9, respectively, following 24 days administration of norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol combination tablets as compared to single-dose administration. Ethinyl estradiol and norethindrone AUC_{0-24h} values increase by a factor of 1.6 and 2.5, respectively, following 24 days administration of norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol combination tablets as compared to single-dose administration. Norethindrone concentrations more than double by Day 24 due to both accumulation and increased SHBG concentration. Steady state with respect to ethinyl estradiol and norethindrone is reached by Day 5 and Day 13, respectively.

Figure 1 - Mean plasma ethinyl estradiol concentration versus time profiles following single- and multiple-dose oral administration of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets to healthy female volunteers (n = 15)

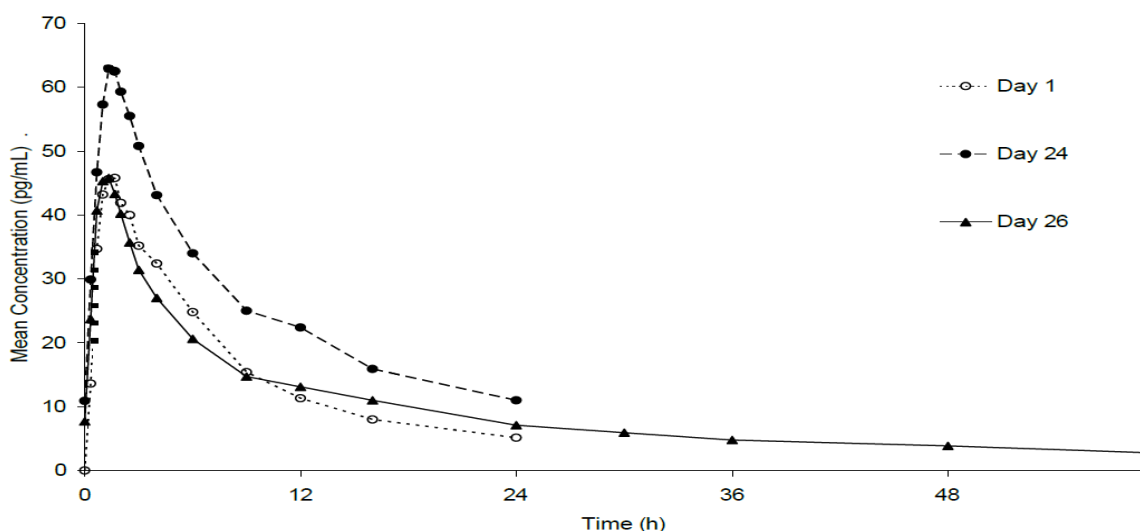
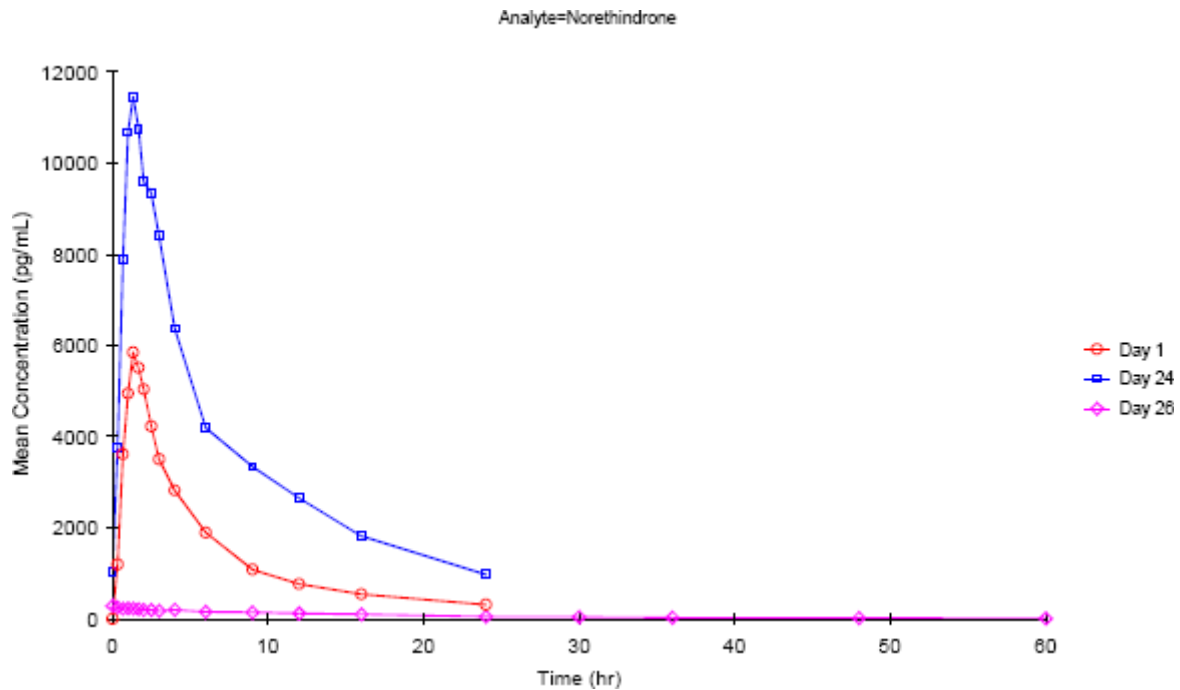


Figure 2 - Mean plasma norethindrone concentration versus time profiles following single- and multiple-dose oral administration of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets to healthy female volunteers (n = 15)



Distribution

Volume of distribution of norethindrone and ethinyl estradiol ranges from 2 to 4 L/kg. Plasma protein binding of both steroids is extensive (> 95%); norethindrone binds to both albumin and SHBG, whereas ethinyl estradiol binds only to albumin. Although ethinyl estradiol does not bind to SHBG, it induces SHBG synthesis.

Metabolism

Norethindrone undergoes extensive biotransformation, primarily via reduction, followed by sulfate and glucuronide conjugation. The majority of metabolites in the circulation are sulfates, with glucuronides accounting for most of the urinary metabolites. A small amount of norethindrone acetate is metabolically converted to ethinyl estradiol.

Ethinyl estradiol is also extensively metabolized, both by oxidation and by conjugation with sulfate and glucuronide. Sulfates are the major circulating conjugates of ethinyl estradiol and glucuronides predominate in urine. The primary oxidative metabolite is 2-hydroxy ethinyl estradiol, formed by the CYP3A4 isoform of cytochrome P450. Part of the first-pass metabolism of ethinyl estradiol is believed to occur in gastrointestinal mucosa. Ethinyl estradiol may undergo enterohepatic circulation.

Elimination

Norethindrone and ethinyl estradiol are excreted in both urine and feces, primarily as

metabolites. Plasma clearance values for norethindrone and ethinyl estradiol are similar (approximately 0.4 L/hr/kg). Elimination half-lives of norethindrone and ethinyl estradiol following administration of 1 mg norethindrone acetate/10 mcg ethinyl estradiol tablets are approximately 10 hours and 16 hours, respectively.

Special Populations and Conditions

- **Ethnic Origin** The effect of race on the disposition of norethindrone and ethinyl estradiol after ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets administration has not been evaluated.
- **Hepatic Insufficiency** The effect of hepatic disease on the disposition of norethindrone and ethinyl estradiol after ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets administration has not been evaluated. However, ethinyl estradiol and norethindrone may be poorly metabolized in patients with impaired liver function.
- **Renal Insufficiency** The effect of renal disease on the disposition of norethindrone and ethinyl estradiol after ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets administration has not been evaluated. In premenopausal women with chronic renal failure undergoing peritoneal dialysis who received multiple doses of an oral contraceptive containing ethinyl estradiol and norethindrone, plasma ethinyl estradiol concentrations were higher and norethindrone concentrations were unchanged compared to concentrations in premenopausal women with normal renal function.

11 STORAGE, STABILITY AND DISPOSAL

Store at controlled room temperature (15°C – 30°C). Keep the tablets in their original package. Keep out of reach and sight of children.

12 SPECIAL HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

Any unused portion or waste material should be disposed of in accordance with local requirements.

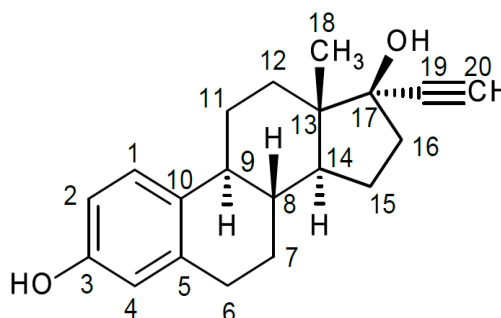
PART II: SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION**13 PHARMACEUTICAL INFORMATION****Drug Substance**

Proper name: ethinyl estradiol

Chemical name: 17- α -ethinyl-1,3,5(10)-estratriene-3,17 beta-diol

Molecular formula and molecular mass: $C_{20}H_{24}O_2$ and 296.41 g/mol

Structural formula:



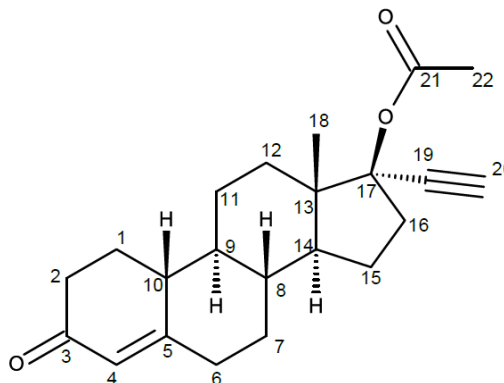
Physicochemical properties: White to practically white crystals or powder. Practically insoluble in water, sparingly soluble in chloroform, very slightly soluble in toluene, soluble in methanol, and freely soluble in ethanol, propranolol, ether and tetrahydrofuran.

Proper name: norethindrone acetate

Chemical name: [19-Norpregn-4-en-20-yn-3-one, 17-(acetyloxy)-, (17 α)-]

Molecular formula and molecular mass: $C_{22}H_{28}O_3$ and 340.5 g/mol

Structural formula:



Physicochemical properties: White to practically white crystals or powder with a melting point of 158°C to 164°C. Practically insoluble in water, soluble in ethanol and ether, and freely soluble in acetone, chloroform, dioxane, methanol, methylene chloride and tetrahydrofuran.

14 CLINICAL TRIALS

14.1 Clinical Trials by Indication

Prevention of pregnancy

Table 6 – Summary of patient demographics for clinical trials in the prevention of pregnancy

Study #	Study design	Dosage, route of administration and duration	Study subjects (n)	Mean weight (Range)	Mean age (Range)	Sex
RR-03108	Non-comparative, multicentre study	Ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets x 13 cycles	1582	150.1 lb (89 – 260 lb)	28.6 years (18 – 45.9 years)	Female

In a one year (thirteen 28-day cycles) multicenter open-label clinical trial, 1,582 women 18 to 45 years of age, were studied to assess the safety and efficacy of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets, completing the equivalent of 15,591 28-day evaluable cycles of exposure. 1,270 women 18 to 35 years of age were studied to assess the efficacy of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets and completed the equivalent of 12,482 28-day evaluable cycles of exposure. The racial demographic of all enrolled women was: Caucasian (74.9%), African-American (11.8%), Hispanic (9.8%), Asian (1.3%), and Other (2.2%). Women with body mass index (BMI) greater than 35 kg/m² were excluded from the study. The weight range for those women treated was 89 to 260 lb, with a mean weight of 150 lb. Among the women in the trial, 51% had not used hormonal contraception immediately prior to enrolling in this study. Of treated women, 13.7% were lost to follow-up, 10.7% discontinued due to an adverse event, and 8.9% discontinued by withdrawing their consent.

General Information

The following table gives reported pregnancy rates for various forms of birth control, including no birth control. The reported rates represent the number of women out of 100 who would become pregnant in one year.

Reported Pregnancies per 100 Women per Year:

Combination pill	less than 1 to 3 ^a
Intrauterine device (IUD)	less than 1 to 6
Condom with spermicidal foam or gel	1 to 6
Mini-pill	3 to 6

Condom	2 to 12
Diaphragm with spermicidal foam or gel	3 to 18
Spermicide	3 to 21
Sponge with spermicide	3 to 28
Cervical cap with spermicide	5 to 18
Periodic abstinence (rhythm), all types	2 to 20
No birth control	60 to 85

^a Based on the results of one clinical study, about 3 out of 100 women may get pregnant during the first year they use ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets.

Study Results

Table 7 – Results of study RR-03108 in the prevention of pregnancy

	ethinyl estradiol tablets/ norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets		
	All Ages	18-35	36-45
	N ^a = 1555	N ^a = 1270	N ^a = 285
No. Pregnancies	28	28	0
No. 28 day treatment cycles	15591	12482	3109
Pearl Index	2.33	2.92	0
	(95% CI: 1.55,3.37)	(95% CI: 1.94, 4.21)	

^a N= number of women with evaluable cycles.

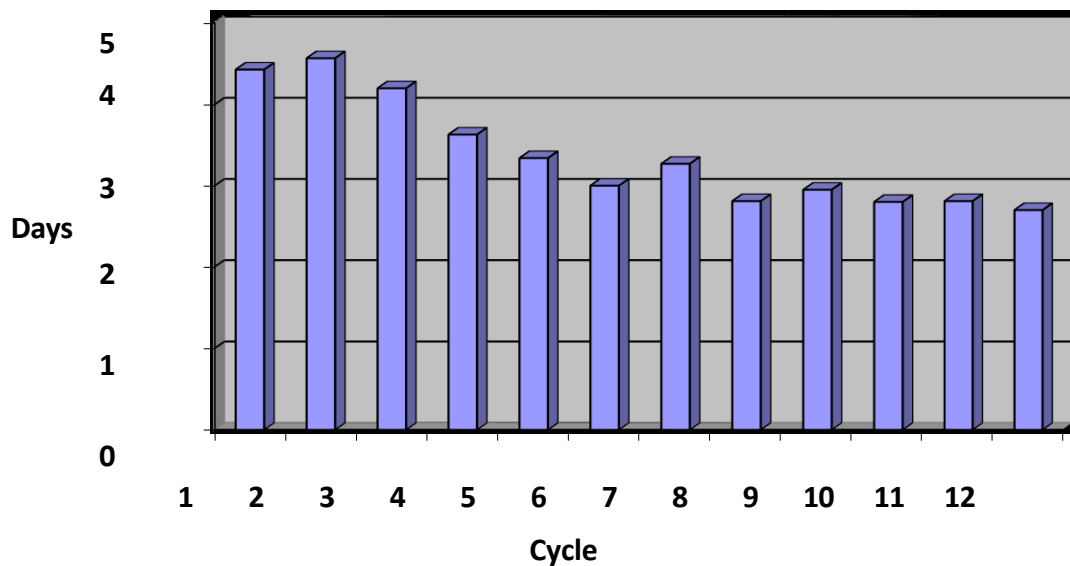
The pregnancy rate (Pearl Index [PI]) in women 18 to 35 years of age was 2.92 (95% confidence interval 1.94 to 4.21) pregnancies per 100 women-years of use, based on 28 pregnancies that occurred after the onset of treatment and extending through the 7 days following the last dose of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets (See [Table 7](#)). Cycles in which conception did not occur, but which included the use of backup contraception, were not included in the calculation of the PI. The PI includes women who did not take the drug correctly.

Bleeding Profile

The clinical trial that evaluated the efficacy of ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets also assessed scheduled and unscheduled (intra-cycle) bleeding and/or spotting (IB/S). The participants in this 12-month clinical trial (N = 1,582 who had at least one post-treatment evaluation) completed over 15,000 cycles of exposure.

Total Bleeding/Spotting (scheduled and unscheduled):

The mean number of total bleeding/spotting days (scheduled and unscheduled) was 3.8 days per cycle and tended to decrease throughout the study from Cycle 2 through Cycle 12 (See

[Figure 3\)](#)**Figure 3: Mean Number of Bleeding Days per Cycle (N = 1582)****Scheduled (withdrawal) Bleeding/Spotting:**

Scheduled (withdrawal) bleeding and/or spotting remained fairly constant over the one year study, with an average of less than 2 days per cycle when including all women and all cycles. The incidence of withdrawal bleeding decreased over the course of the study, from 43% of subjects during Cycle 1 to 22% during Cycle 13. Incidence and duration of withdrawal bleeds tended to be greater in new users than in switchers.

Intensity of a bleeding/spotting episode was defined by a score of 0 to 3 where 0 = none, 1 = light; 2 = normal; and 3 = heavy. The overall mean median intensity of withdrawal bleeding/spotting was 1.53 for Cycle 2 through Cycle 13.

Unscheduled (intra-cycle) Bleeding and or Spotting (IB/S):

The mean number of days per cycle of IB/S decreased over the course of the study from 3.2 days during Cycle 2 to 1.8 days during Cycle 13. The mean duration throughout the study was 2.6 days/cycle.

A total of 1,257 women (85.9%) experienced IB/S at some time during Cycles 2 to 13 of this study. The incidence of IB/S was highest during Cycle 2 (53%) and lowest at Cycle 13 (36%).

Subjects in the study reported an average of 0.53 episodes per cycle of IB/S during the study. The mean maximum intensity score for IB/S episodes was 1.6 for Cycles 2 through Cycle 13.

In all subgroups (new users, switchers, 18 to 35 and 36 to 45) the numbers of IB/S, spotting only and bleeding-only days per cycle decreased over the course of the study. The incidence of IB/S, the mean number of episodes and the mean intensity for IB/S were higher in younger patients 18 to 35 than those 36 to 45. Measures of IB/S such as incidence and number of episodes, and maximum intensity tended to be higher in new users than in switchers, and decreased over the course of the study.

Amenorrhea:

The incidence of amenorrhea (absence of bleeding throughout the cycle) during Cycles 1 to 3 was approximately 30 to 32%, and increased to 49% for Cycle 13. In general the incidence of absence of bleeding was higher in older subjects (age 36 to 45), and in switchers vs. new users.

14.2 Comparative Bioavailability Studies

A blinded, randomized, two-treatment, two-period, two sequence, single oral dose (0.01 mg/1 mg dose as 1 x 0.01 mg/1 mg), crossover comparative bioavailability study of ELFY (Apotex Inc.) and LOLO (Allergan Inc.) was conducted in healthy, adult, female subjects under fasted conditions. Comparative bioavailability data from 37 subjects that were included in the statistical analysis are presented in the following tables:

SUMMARY TABLES OF THE COMPARATIVE BIOAVAILABILITY DATA

Ethinyl estradiol (1 × 0.01 mg / 1 mg ethinyl estradiol / norethindrone acetate) Geometric Mean Arithmetic Mean (CV%)				
Parameter	Test¹	Reference²	% Ratio of Geometric Means	90% Confidence Interval
AUC _T (pg·h/mL)	347.47 374.11 (38.8)	362.92 389.13 (38.9)	95.7	91.4 - 100.3
AUC _i (pg·h/mL)	389.16 416.92 (37.8)	404.49 434.16 (39.5)	96.2	91.6 - 101.0
C _{max} (pg/mL)	31.64 32.71 (26.3)	32.03 33.06 (26.1)	98.8	95.3 - 102.4
T _{max} ³ (h)	1.67 (0.75 - 2.68)	1.33 (1.00- 2.35)		
T _{1/2} ⁴ (h)	17.86 (27.1)	18.60 (40.6)		

¹ELFY (ethinyl estradiol / norethindrone acetate) tablets, 0.01 mg/1 mg (Apotex Inc.)

²LOLO (ethinyl estradiol / norethindrone acetate) tablets, 0.01 mg/1 mg (Allergan Inc., Canada)

³ Expressed as the median (range) only

⁴ Expressed as the arithmetic mean (CV%) only

Norethindrone (1 × 0.01 mg / 1 mg ethinyl estradiol / norethindrone acetate) Geometric Mean Arithmetic Mean (CV%)				
Parameter	Test ¹	Reference ²	% Ratio of Geometric Means	90% Confidence Interval
AUC _T (pg·h/mL)	47011.39 57072.10 (62.7)	45336.68 52606.48 (55.7)	103.7	94.2 - 114.1
AUC _I (pg·h/mL)	48851.04 58840.33 (61.4)	47099.42 54303.97 (54.4)	103.7	94.4 - 114.0
C _{max} (pg/mL)	8270.04 9449.63 (53.6)	7561.93 8282.94 (40.9)	109.4	99.3 - 120.4
T _{max} ³ (h)	2.00 (0.75 - 5.00)	1.67 (1.00 - 5.00)		
T _{1/2} ⁴ (h)	11.62 (27.4)	11.42 (20.7)		

¹ELFY (ethinyl estradiol / norethindrone acetate) tablets, 0.01 mg/1 mg (Apotex Inc.)

²LOLO(ethinyl estradiol / norethindrone acetate) tablets, 0.01 mg/1 mg (Allergan Inc., Canada)

³ Expressed as the median (range) only

⁴ Expressed as the arithmetic mean (CV%) only

A blinded, randomized, two-treatment, two-period, two sequence, single oral dose (0.01 mg dose as 1 x 0.01 mg), crossover comparative bioavailability study of ELFY (Apotex Inc.) and LOLO (Allergan Inc.) was conducted in healthy, adult, female subjects under fasted conditions. Comparative bioavailability data from 25 subjects that were included in the statistical analysis are presented in the following table:

SUMMARY TABLE OF THE COMPARATIVE BIOAVAILABILITY DATA

Ethinyl Estradiol (1 x 0.01 mg) Geometric Mean Arithmetic Mean (CV%)				
Parameter	Test ¹	Reference ²	% Ratio of Geometric Means	90% Confidence Interval
AUC _T (pg·h/mL)	260.33 272.14 (28.27)	268.93 288.69 (36.23)	96.8	90.8- 103.2
AUC _I (pg·h/mL)	296.65 308.17 (26.48)	311.00 332.02 (35.17)	95.4	89.9- 101.2
C _{max} (pg/mL)	26.88 27.81 (26.43)	27.55 28.94 (29.90)	97.6	91.8- 103.7
T _{max} ³ (h)	1.33 (1.00- 3.00)	1.33 (0.75- 1.67)		
T _{1/2} ⁴ (h)	16.73 (16.41)	18.26 (21.03)		

¹ ELFY (ethinyl estradiol) tablets, 0.01 mg (Apotex Inc.)

² LOLO (ethinyl estradiol) tablets, 0.01 mg (Allergan Inc., Canada)

³ Expressed as the median (range) only

⁴ Expressed as the arithmetic mean (CV%) only

15 MICROBIOLOGY

No microbiological information is required for this drug product.

16 NON-CLINICAL TOXICOLOGY

General Toxicology:

Toxicity Studies of Norethindrone Acetate in Animals

The LD₅₀ value of norethindrone acetate (on intraperitoneal administration to rats was greater than 1000 mg per kg body weight. The drug produced no toxic effects or abnormalities when administered orally to dogs in a single 30 mg dose. Administration of norethindrone acetate by the drug-diet method in rats over a period of 41 weeks produced depression in food intake and weight gain comparable to that following the use of norethindrone. Animals received average daily doses of 6, 14, and 27 mg per kg body weight.

Hematocrit, hemoglobin and leukocyte counts were not noticeably affected. Cholesterol values were low in all drug-fed animals, but all other microchemical determinations (minerals, transaminase, proteins, bilirubin, glucose and urea nitrogen) revealed normal values.

Histologic examination of tissues showed functional depression of testes and seminal vesicles and atrophy of pituitary and adrenal glands at the two higher dosage levels. Liver cell atrophy and several deviations of a minor nature were also noted.

Results indicated that the acetate is as well tolerated as norethindrone in continuous long-term use.

Long-Term Use of Norethindrone in Monkeys

Long-term oral administration of norethindrone to female rhesus monkeys produced only temporary changes in ovarian function. Six monkeys were treated for two years and 12 monkeys for one year at a dosage of 2.5 mg daily for 21 days of each cycle. This is comparable to a dosage of 25 mg daily for eight- and four-year periods in humans. Extensive studies were conducted on the blood, bone marrow, and on the various other tissues and organs, particularly the ovaries. The only noteworthy differences between control and treated animals were found in the genital organs and the pituitary. The treated monkeys could not be differentiated from control on the basis of general health, alertness, and behaviour. Bleeding usually started on the third or fourth day after discontinuation of drug administration each month, lasted three or four days, and was never heavy.

Ovaries from animals treated for one or two years were small, whitish with only small follicles visible, and no sign of recent rupture or of corpora lutea. Germinal epithelium was intact, and the layer of primordial oocytes and young follicles appeared normal. Inside this cortical layer were small and medium-sized vesicular follicles and many corpora atretica, remnants of old follicles. Follicles had developed normally until the vesicular stage and then degenerated before attaining their full preovulatory growth.

Oocytes appeared normal in all stages of development until the last pre-ovulatory step when maturation was inhibited. Uteri of treated monkeys had proliferative endometria with no decidual changes in the stroma. The vaginal tracts exhibited moderate to considerable epithelial cornification. Mammary glands were in the resting stage. Pituitaries of treated monkeys showed a decrease of basophilic cells.

Normal ovulatory cycles resumed shortly after medication was stopped. The sexual skin increased in redness, the vaginal epithelium became highly cornified during ovulation, and corpora lutea developed in the ovaries. The number and appearance of ova were normal, as was the rate of atresia. Endometria were proliferative or secretory. The ability to conceive also returned. The conception rate in the treated group compared favourably with that in the control group. Babies of treated animals were all normal at birth, and the females developed normally.

In summary, it was concluded from these studies that continuous administration of norethindrone for periods of one and two years suppressed ovulation without permanent effects on ovarian function and fertility of monkeys.

Chronic Oral Toxicities in Monkeys

Chronic oral toxicity studies were conducted in 8 immature rhesus monkeys - 4 males and 4 females. Norethindrone was administered in the amount of 2.5 mg per kg daily, five days a week for 183 days. No gross or microscopic signs of drug toxicity were found from blood

studies, biopsies or at autopsy. As might be anticipated, testicular atrophy occurred in the males. There was also evidence of hormonal stimulation of the sexual skin and mammary glands of both sexes and of the uterine mucosa in females.

Long-Term Oral Studies of the Combination

Dogs

A combination of 50 parts norethindrone acetate to one part ethinyl estradiol was administered orally for 7 years at dosage levels of 0.051, 0.51, and 1.275 mg/kg/day (equivalent to 1, 10 and 25 times the human dose) in 28-day cycles (21 days of drug administration followed by 7 days of drug withdrawal). Sixteen dogs were initiated as controls and at each dosage level.

All dogs were observed daily. Body weights were recorded weekly. Mammary examinations were conducted once each month. Ophthalmoscopic examinations (indirect technique) were done every six months. Clotting studies were conducted for all dogs twice during the control period, six times during the first year, and semi-annually thereafter. Urinary steroid outputs were done once during the control period and annually thereafter.

One control dog and 9 treated dogs died or were sacrificed in extremis during the study. At the end of 7 years of study, the number of dogs surviving in each group was 15, 15, 14 and 10 at the control, 0.051, 0.51, and 1.275 mg/kg/day dosage levels, respectively. One dog at the 0.051 and 0.51 mg/kg/day dosage levels, and 2 dogs at the 1.275 mg/kg/day dose levels were hysterectomized during the study. At the end of 7 years of study, nodules were palpated in the mammary tissue of 5 control dogs, 5 dogs at the 0.051 mg/kg/day dosage level, 6 dogs at the 0.51 mg/kg/day level and 6 dogs at the 1.275 mg/kg/day level. Frequently, nodules disappeared after variable periods of time. Only rarely did nodules reach or exceed 10 mm in diameter, and commonly the behaviour of these indicated that they were cystic in nature.

Alopecia was seen more frequently for treated dogs than for control dogs. Red or brown vaginal discharge was seen most frequently for control dogs and dogs at the 0.051 mg/kg/day dosage level. It was rarely noted for dogs at the 0.51 and 1.275 mg/kg/day dosage levels following 18 months of study. Treated dogs showed greater body weight gains than control dogs. No changes considered to be related to treatment were seen in the mammary development, behaviour or in urinary steroid output.

Fibrinogen concentrations were somewhat greater for treated dogs than for control dogs during the 6th and 7th years of study. No other unusual changes were noted in clotting studies.

Ophthalmologic examinations revealed eye changes for several dogs in each group. No drug relationship was noted with respect to the occurrence of these changes. Drug related gross lesions consisting of alopecia and enlarged and/or cystic uteri were observed in a number of dogs at terminal sacrifice. Organ weight effects were limited to increase in uterine weights of individuals in most experimental groups. Microscopically, drug related changes included absence of ovulation in all dogs in the high-dose group and most dogs in the mid-dose group, and increased incidence and severity of cystic endometrial hyperplasia and uterine adenomyosis in dogs in the high dose group.

The occurrence of benign tumours in vaginas and uteri of several dogs in the high dose group

was considered drug related. Hyperplastic nodules and benign tumours occurred in mammary glands of dogs both in control and treated groups, but the incidence at the high-dose level was somewhat greater. No malignant mammary neoplasm occurred in any of the dogs in this study.

Monkeys

A combination of 50 parts of norethindrone acetate to one part ethinyl estradiol was administered orally to mature female rhesus monkeys in a long-term study for a period of 10 years at dosage levels of 0.051, 0.51, and 2.55 mg/kg/day (1, 10, and 50 times the human dose). The dosing regimen consisted of consecutive cycles of 21 days of drug administration followed by 7 days of drug withdrawal. Sixteen monkeys were assigned to each treatment group; while an additional 16 animals received the food vehicle only. Daily observations of general health revealed no evidence of overt effects of drug treatment or significant changes in behaviour. The percent body weight gain of surviving animals was comparable, although the body weights of the treated groups were less than controls at some intervals.

Red vaginal discharge occurred with greater frequency in control and low-dose groups and was usually observed in the withdrawal phase of the mid- and high-dose groups, reflecting the pharmacologic action of the drug combination. No drug related alterations were noted in vaginal cytology or mammary development.

A retinal macular granularity, with and without foci of altered reflectivity, was noted in both control and treated animals beginning at 6 years. Although the incidence and severity of these alterations appeared to be greater in treated animals, no definite relationship to drug administration was considered to have been established.

Reduced total platelet count and increased fibrinogen concentrations were noted more frequently for treated monkeys during the initial 90 months and 48 months of study, respectively. An occasional animal showed an elevated postprandial glucose concentration, but no treatment or dosage relationship was apparent. No drug related alteration in urinary steroid output was observed.

Small nodules were palpable in or near the mammary tissue of five, four, three, and two monkeys in the control, 0.051, 0.51, and 2.55 mg/kg/day dosage groups, respectively, at least at one examination. Detailed physical examinations also revealed an abdominal mass in 2 control monkeys, slight curvature of the spine in 2 low-dose animals, and a pulsating saphenous vein in a high-dose animal. No drug related gross lesions were seen in animals that died, were sacrificed *in extremi* during the study or were terminally sacrificed. A frequent cause of death in this study, which is a common occurrence in non-human primates, was acute gastric dilatation. The lesions observed at necropsy appeared spontaneous and unrelated to drug administration.

A statistically significant decrease ($p < 0.05$) in the mean absolute uterine weight at the high-dose level was drug related. Microscopically, drug related lesions included uterine atrophy, slightly increased incidence of occurrence of mucus and inflammatory cells in the cervical canal, and dilatation of acini and ducts in mammary glands of monkeys from the high-dose group, were considered to be related to the pharmacologic effect of the test combination.

No drug related neoplasms were observed in the study. A low overall incidence of neoplasms was seen in all organs and tissues examined. A total of 6 neoplastic microscopic lesions were noted during this entire study; an adenoma (pancreatic duct origin) in a low-dose animal; a granulosa cell carcinoma (ovary) in a control animal with metastasis to liver, lymph node, and lung; and a leiomyoma (uterus) and 2 papillomas (skin) in high-dose animals. With the exception of the granulosa cell carcinoma, no malignant neoplasms were identified.

17 SUPPORTING PRODUCT MONOGRAPHS

1. LOLO® (ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets, 10 mcg / 1 mg and 10 mcg), submission control no.286305, Product Monograph, AbbVie Corporation, (OCT 17, 2024).

PATIENT MEDICATION INFORMATION

READ THIS FOR SAFE AND EFFECTIVE USE OF YOUR MEDICINE

Pr**ELFY**[™]

Ethinyl Estradiol Tablets / Norethindrone Acetate and Ethinyl Estradiol Tablets

Read this carefully before you start taking **ELFY** and each time you get a refill. This leaflet is a summary and will not tell you everything about this drug. Talk to your healthcare professional about your medical condition and treatment and ask if there is any new information about **ELFY**.

Serious Warnings and Precautions

- Cigarette smoking increases the risk of serious effects on the heart and blood vessels. This risk increases as you get older, particularly once you are over 35 years of age. The risk also increases with the number of cigarettes smoked. For this reason, women who smoke and are over 35 years of age should not use **ELFY**.
- Birth control pills **do not protect** against sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and AIDS. To protect yourself against STIs, use latex or polyurethane condoms when you have sex **and** take your birth control pills.

What is **ELFY** used for?

- **ELFY** is used to prevent pregnancy.
- **ELFY** is a birth control pill. It is considered to be a combination oral contraceptive. This is because it contains two female sex hormones: norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol. **ELFY** has been shown to be effective in preventing pregnancy when taken as prescribed by your healthcare professional.

How does **ELFY** work?

Combination hormonal contraceptives, like **ELFY** work in two ways:

- to stop the monthly release of an egg by the ovaries.
- to change the mucus produced by your cervix. This slows the movement of the sperm through the mucus and through the uterus.

Effectiveness of **ELFY**

The results of one clinical trial show that, about 3 out of 100 women may get pregnant during the first year they use **ELFY**. The chance of becoming pregnant increases if **ELFY** is not used correctly.

Women who were overweight (with a Body Mass Index (BMI) above 35 kg/m²) were not studied in the clinical trial. It is not known how well **ELFY** will prevent pregnancy in these women. If you are overweight (obese), you and your healthcare professional will decide if **ELFY**

is the best choice for you.

Other Ways to Prevent Pregnancy

There are other methods of birth control available. These are usually less effective than birth control pills. If used properly, the other methods of birth control are effective enough for many women.

The following table lists pregnancy rates for different types of birth control. A pregnancy rate is the number of women out of 100 who would become pregnant in one year.

Reported Pregnancies per 100 Women per Year:

Combination pill	less than 1 to 3
Intrauterine device (IUD)	less than 1 to 6
Condom & spermicidal foam or gel	1 to 6
Mini-pill	3 to 6
Condom	2 to 12
Diaphragm with spermicidal foam or gel	3 to 18
Spermicide	3 to 21
Sponge with spermicide	3 to 28
Cervical cap with spermicide	5 to 18
Periodic abstinence (rhythm), all types	2 to 20
No birth control	60 to 85

There are differences in these pregnancy rates. This is because not all people use birth control as carefully or as regularly as they should. This does not apply to IUDs since these are implanted in the uterus. If you are careful and use your birth control regularly, pregnancy rates should be lower. Some types of birth control will require more effort than taking a single pill every day.

What are the ingredients in ELFY?

Medicinal ingredients: ethinyl estradiol and norethindrone acetate

Non-medicinal ingredients for the blue tablets and white tablets: Lactose monohydrate, magnesium stearate, mannitol, microcrystalline cellulose, povidone, sodium starch glycolate and vitamin E. The blue tablets also contain FD&C Blue No. 1 Aluminum Lake.

Ingredients for the lilac tablets: FD&C Blue No. 1 Aluminum Lake, FD&C Red No. 3 Aluminum Lake and FD&C Red No. 40 Aluminum Lake, lactose monohydrate, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose and sodium starch glycolate.

ELFY comes in the following dosage forms:

ELFY (ethinyl estradiol tablets / norethindrone acetate and ethinyl estradiol tablets)

Page 46 of 59

- White tablets: 10 mcg ethinyl estradiol
- Blue tablets: 1 mg norethindrone acetate and 10 mcg ethinyl estradiol
- Lilac tablets: no active ingredient (placebo)

Do not use ELFY if:

- you have or had a blood clot in the legs (deep vein thrombosis), lung (pulmonary embolism), eyes or somewhere else in your body;
- you have or had inflammation of a vein. This is called thrombophlebitis;
- you had a stroke or heart attack;
- you have coronary artery disease (including angina) or a condition that may be a first sign of stroke (such as ministroke or small reversible stroke);
- you have or had a disease of the heart valves with complications;
- you have liver disease (including hepatitis C) or have a history of liver tumours (cancerous or non- cancerous);
- you have or had jaundice. This is when the skin or whites of the eyes turn yellow. This may have been related to other medicines you were taking or may have happened during pregnancy;
- you have or you think you have breast cancer, cancer of the endometrium (lining of the uterus) or a cancer that is sensitive to hormones;
- you have unusual vaginal bleeding without a known reason;
- you have blood vessel disease of the eye that has caused loss of vision;
- you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant;
- you have or had migraine headaches;
- you have or had inflammation of the pancreas (pancreatitis) and high levels of fat in your blood (triglycerides);
- you have severe high blood pressure or high blood pressure that is not under control;
- you have a blood clotting disorder such as:
 - Factor V Leiden mutation,
 - Activated protein C (APC) resistance,
 - Protein C deficiency,
 - Protein S deficiency,
 - Hyperhomocysteinemia,
 - Prothrombin mutation G20210A,
 - Antiphospholipid-antibodies.
- you have diabetes with complications;
- you have an unusual amount of lipoproteins in your blood;
- you are over age 35 and you smoke;
- you are scheduled for major surgery;
- you have or will have long periods where you are not mobile including prolonged bed rest;
- you are taking medicines to treat hepatitis C called ombitasvir, paritaprevir, ritonavir, with or without dasabuvir. Using these drugs at the same time as ELFY can cause problems with your liver, such as an increase in the alanine transaminase (ALT) liver enzyme. You must finish your hepatitis C treatment first before starting ELFY. Your healthcare professional will tell you when to start, stop or restart ELFY if you need to take these hepatitis C drugs;
- you are allergic to ethinyl estradiol, norethindrone acetate or to any of the other ingredients in ELFY.

Tell your doctor if you have ever had any of the above conditions. Your healthcare professional can recommend another method of birth control.

To help avoid side effects and ensure proper use, talk to your healthcare professional before you take ELFY. Talk about any health conditions or problems you may have, including if you:

- are overweight;
- have a history of breast disease (such as breast lumps) or family history of breast cancer;
- have high blood pressure;
- have high cholesterol;
- have diabetes;
- have heart or kidney disease;
- have a history of seizures or have epilepsy;
- have a history of depression;
- have cholestasis. This is a condition where the bile flow from the liver is decreased.
- wear contact lenses;
- have uterine fibroids. These are benign tumours of the uterus.
- are under 18 years of age;
- are in menopause;
- have porphyria. This is a disease of blood pigment that is passed down in families (inherited).
- have systemic lupus erythematosus. This is a disease of the immune system that affects many organs of the body.
- have inflammatory bowel disease including Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis;
- have haemolytic uremic syndrome. This is when there is an abnormal breakdown of blood cells, which clogs the kidney.
- have sickle cell disease. This is a disease that affects hemoglobin, a molecule in red blood cells that delivers oxygen throughout the body.
- have problems with the valves in your heart and/or have an irregular heart beat;
- have a condition called hereditary angioedema or if you have had episodes of swelling in body parts such as hands, feet, face, eyes or airway passages.

Other warnings you should know about:

Blood clot in legs, lungs, heart, eyes or brain

Women who use birth control that contains hormones are more likely to develop blood clots. Blood clots are the most common serious side effects of birth control pills. The risk for clots is highest during the first year a woman uses a hormonal birth control. Clots can occur in many areas of the body and can lead to blindness or impaired vision as well as damage to or loss of a limb and death.

While you are taking ELFY, if you have any of the below symptoms, contact your healthcare professional right away. These are signs of blood clots:

- sharp pain in your chest,
- coughing up blood,
- sudden shortness of breath,
- pain and / or swelling in your calf,
- crushing chest pain or chest heaviness,

- sudden severe or worsening headache,
- vomiting,
- dizziness,
- fainting,
- changes in vision,
- changes in speech,
- weakness or numbness in an arm or leg,
- sudden pain, swelling and slight blue discoloration of an arm or leg.

Cancer

Using birth control pills may increase the risk of certain cancers including cancer of the breast, cervix and liver.

Breast cancer:

The risk of breast cancer in women increases as you get older. It also increases if there is family history of breast cancer, meaning if your mother or sister have or had breast cancer. Other factors that increase your risk for breast cancer are being obese, never having children, or having your first full-term pregnancy at a late age.

If you have breast cancer now, or had it in the past, do not use birth control pills. The hormones in these pills can affect some cancers.

Some women who use birth control pills may have a higher risk of developing breast cancer before menopause. These women may have used birth control pills for a long time (more than eight years), or may have started using birth control pills at an early age.

In a few women, using of birth control pills can speed up the growth of a breast cancer that has not yet been found. Finding breast cancer early can reduce the effect of the cancer on a woman's life expectancy. The risks for breast cancer related to using birth control pills seem to be small. You should, however, have a healthcare professional check your breasts at least once per year.

While you are taking ELFY, check your breasts often. See your healthcare professional if you notice any changes, such as:

- dimpling or sinking of the skin,
- changes in the nipple, or
- any lumps you can see or feel.

Cervical cancer:

Women who use birth control pills may have a higher chance of getting cervical cancer. However, this may be due to other reasons including infection with the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). HPV is an important risk factor for cervical cancer. However, it is possible that oral birth control pills may also cause such cancers.

Liver cancer:

Liver cancer (hepatocellular carcinoma) and liver tumours may be linked to oral birth control pills. The risk for liver cancer increases the longer these pills are used. However liver

tumours are extremely rare. If you feel severe abdominal pain or find a lump in your abdomen, contact your healthcare professional right away.

Gallbladder disease

The risk for gallbladder disease that needs surgery is higher in women using birth control pills. The risk is highest in the first year of use and increases the longer these pills are used.

Vaginal bleeding

Breakthrough bleeding or spotting sometimes happens in women using birth control pills including ELFY. This is blood coming from the vagina between periods. It is most likely to happen in the first three months of starting a birth control pill. If the bleeding is heavy or does not stop, contact your healthcare professional.

While you are taking ELFY you may not get your period each month. If you were not taking ELFY as directed by your healthcare professional, you should have a pregnancy test. This will rule out if the missed period is because you are pregnant.

If you go more than 6 months without a period contact your healthcare professional. This will be especially important if you also notice secretions from your breasts.

Use after pregnancy, miscarriage or an abortion

Your healthcare professional will tell you when to start using ELFY after childbirth, miscarriage or an abortion.

Pregnancy after stopping ELFY

You will have a menstrual period when you stop using ELFY. Wait until after your next period before getting pregnant. This will help to better date the pregnancy. Speak to your healthcare professional about other forms of birth control you can use during this time.

Breast feeding

If you are breastfeeding, talk to your healthcare professional before starting the birth control pill. Other types of birth control, instead of a birth control pill, are recommended until your baby has stopped breastfeeding. The hormones in the pill may lower the amount and quality of your breast milk. This may not happen, however, if you wait until after nursing is established.

Skin conditions

Chloasma may develop while you are using ELFY. This appears as yellowish-brown patches on the skin, particularly of the face. It is more likely to happen if you have previously had chloasma gravidarum. This is when these patches appear on the skin of the face during pregnancy. This is commonly known as “the mask of pregnancy”.

If you have or had chloasma, avoid too much exposure to the sun while using ELFY. Sunlight

contains invisible rays (ultraviolet light) that can burn the skin.

Surgery or medical treatment

Be sure to tell your healthcare professional if you are scheduled for surgery or other medical treatment. You may need to stop using ELFY four weeks before surgery. You may need to wait until after your first period following surgery before restarting ELFY.

Check-ups and tests

Before starting ELFY, you will need to have examinations and tests. Your healthcare professional will conduct a physical exam. He or she will examine your breasts, liver, arms and legs and will conduct a pelvic exam. Your healthcare professional will also ask you some questions about your personal health history and that of your close relatives. He or she will also measure your blood pressure and do blood tests.

While you are taking ELFY, you will need to have regular check-ups with your healthcare professional. Your first check up should be about three months after starting ELFY. Afterward, you will see your healthcare professional about once per year. At these visits, your healthcare professional will conduct physical and internal exams. He or she will also measure your blood pressure and do blood tests.

If you are scheduled for any laboratory tests, be sure to tell your healthcare professional that you are taking ELFY. This is because birth control pills can affect some blood tests.

ELFY may not work as well as it should to prevent pregnancy if you:

- miss pills,
- don't take your pills as directed by your healthcare professional,
- have gastrointestinal problems
- are taking certain medicines.

Tell your healthcare professional about all the medicines you take, including any drugs, vitamins, minerals, natural supplements or alternative medicines.

Some medicines can affect how birth control pills work. In fact, some medicines may make birth control pills less effective. This means that you may not be fully protected from getting pregnant. As well, you may develop unexpected vaginal bleeding. You may need to use an additional (back-up) method of birth control while you are taking other medicines. Your healthcare professional will talk to you about this and tell you for how long this will be needed.

If you see a different healthcare professional or a dentist who prescribes another medicine to you, be sure to tell him or her that you are using ELFY. They can tell you if you need to use additional birth control and, if so, for how long.

The following may interact with ELFY:

- medicines to treat epilepsy including ethosuximide, felbamate, lamotrigine,

oxcarbazepine, phenobarbital, phenytoin, primidone, barbiturates, carbamazepine, topiramate;

- medicines to treat tuberculosis including rifampin, rifabutin;
- medicines to treat HIV infections including ritonavir, nevirapine;
- alpha-II adrenoreceptor agents including clonidine;
- medicines for hepatitis C virus including ombitasvir, paritaprevir/ritonavir, with or without dasabuvir, telaprevir;
- medicines to treat bacterial infections including ampicillin, cotrimoxazole, penicillins, chloramphenicol, neomycin, nitrofurantoin, sulfonamides, tetracyclines, troleandomycin, metronidazole;
- medicines to treat fungal infections including griseofulvin;
- medicines to lower cholesterol levels including clofibrate;
- medicines to prevent blood clots;
- St. John's wort, an herbal product used to treat depression and other conditions;
- medicines to treat high blood pressure including guanethidine, methyldopa, beta blockers, reserpine;
- medicines to treat diabetes including insulin and oral drugs that lower blood sugar;
- medicines to help you relax or sleep including benzodiazepines, chlordiazepoxide, lorazepam, oxazepam, diazepam, phenothiazines, reserpine, barbiturates, chloral hydrate, glutethimide, meprobamate;
- medicines to treat depression including clomipramine;
- medicines to treat fever, pain or inflammation including acetaminophen, acetylsalicylic acid (ASA), antipyrine, meperidine, prednisone, phenylbutazone;
- medicines to treat allergies;
- medicines to treat migraine headaches;
- folic acid and vitamins E and B12;
- a medicine to help prevent organ rejection called cyclosporine;
- a medicine to help treat bleeding called aminocaproic acid;
- medicines to treat lung diseases such as asthma and Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (bronchitis, emphysema) including theophylline;
- medicines to slow the heart rate including isoproterenol;
- medicine to treat high blood pressure in the blood vessels between the heart and the lungs (pulmonary hypertension) including bosentan.

Antacids may affect how ELFY is absorbed in your body. If you need to use antacids, like TUMS, take them 2 hours before or 2 hours after taking ELFY.

The effects of caffeine and alcohol may also be increased. This is because birth control pills affect how these are metabolized.

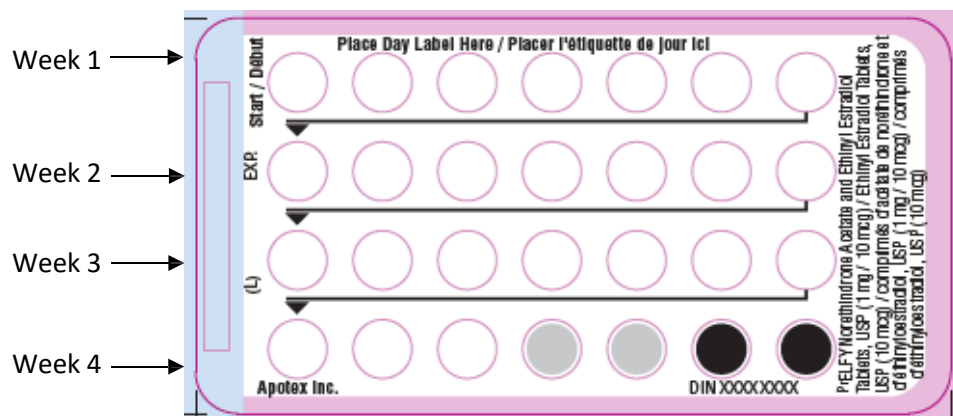
How to take ELFY:

- **Be sure to read these directions:**
 - before you start taking your pills, and
 - anytime you are not sure what to do.

- For Day 1 Starters, pick the Day Label strip that corresponds with the first day of your period. This is the day you start bleeding or spotting, even if it is almost midnight when the bleeding begins. If you are a Sunday Starter (your healthcare professional has told you to start ELFY on the Sunday after your period begins), pick the day label strip that starts with Sunday.
- Place the Day Label strip on the top edge of the blister card. This sticker will go over the words: “Place Day Label Here”. Labelling the card with the days of the week will help remind you to take your pill everyday.
- **Look at your pill pack:**
 - Each ELFY pack contains:
 - 24 blue pills. These contain progestin and estrogen hormones.
 - 2 white pills. These contain only estrogen.
 - 2 lilac pills. These do not contain any hormones and are considered placebos.
 - Check the pill pack for:
 - where to start taking pills; and
 - the order to take the pills. Follow the arrows in the diagram. Take pills from left to right in the pack each week.

For Day 1 Starters, pick the Day label strip that corresponds with the first day of your period. This is the day you start bleeding or spotting, even if it is almost midnight when the bleeding begins. If you are a Sunday Starter (your healthcare professional has told you to start ELFY on the Sunday after your period begins), pick the day label strip that starts with Sunday.

Start here for both Sunday Starters and Day 1 Starters



Take pills in this direction from left to right each week

- **Taking ELFY:**
 - Take ELFY exactly as directed by your healthcare professional.

- Take 1 pill each day at about the same time.
- Take ELFY with or without food.
- Start taking ELFY on either:
 - Day 1 of your period. This is called “Day 1 Start”; or
 - The first Sunday after your period starts. This is called “Sunday Start”.
- Take ELFY according to this schedule:
 - Take 1 blue tablet each day for 24 days in a row.
 - Then, take 1 white tablet each day for 2 days in row.
 - Then, take 1 lilac tablet each day for 2 days in a row.
 - Start a new pack of ELFY on the next day. Follow the above schedule with each pack of ELFY.
- Be sure to use all the pills in each pack.
- Do not skip any days. There is no need to stop taking ELFY for a rest period.
- Do not skip pills even if you are spotting or bleeding between monthly periods or feel sick to your stomach.
- Do not skip pills even if you do not have sex very often.

If you have trouble remembering to take the pill, talk to your healthcare professional. He or she can advise on how to make pill-taking easier or about using another method of birth control.

For Day 1 Starters: ELFY will start working right away.

For Sunday Starters: Use a second method of birth control (e.g. latex or polyurethane condoms and spermicidal foam or gel) for the first 7 days of your first cycle of ELFY use. This will provide a back-up while you are getting used to taking ELFY.

You may miss your period while you are taking ELFY. If you have been having regular periods and then do not have a period for two or more cycles, you may be pregnant. Contact your healthcare professional if this happens.

If you vomit or have diarrhea within 3 or 4 hours of taking a white or blue ELFY tablet, ELFY may not work as well. If this happens, use a back-up method of birth control until you check with your healthcare professional.

You may have spotting or light bleeding or you may feel sick to your stomach while you are taking your first 1 to 3 packs of ELFY. This is normal. If this happens, do not stop taking ELFY. These symptoms will usually go away. If they remain for a long time, check with your healthcare professional.

Switching to ELFY from a different type of birth control:

- If you are switching from another birth control pill, talk to your healthcare professional about when to start taking ELFY. You may need to wait about 1 week between the different pills.
- If you are switching from a vaginal ring or skin patch, wait 7 days after removing the ring or patch before starting ELFY.

- If you are switching from a type of birth control that is implanted under your skin, start taking ELFY on the day the implant is taken out.
- If you switch from a type of birth control that is injected into your body, start taking ELFY on the day the next injection would happen.
- If you are switching from an IUD, talk to your healthcare professional about when to start ELFY. You may need to use a back-up method of birth control during the switch.

Usual dose:

Females 18 years and older: 1 tablet per day

Overdose:

If young children swallow large doses of birth control pills, serious side effects are not expected. If too many birth control pills are taken at one time, nausea, vomiting and vaginal bleeding in women are possible.

If you think you, or a person you are caring for, have taken too much ELFY, contact your healthcare professional, hospital emergency department, or regional poison control centre immediately, even if there are no symptoms.

Missed dose:

If you miss blue or white pills, you could get pregnant. The more pills you miss, the more likely you are to get pregnant. This is especially true if you miss taking the first few or the last few blue pills in a pack.

Missing pills can cause you to have some spotting or light bleeding, even if you take the missed pills.

The following chart tells you what to do if you miss taking one or more birth control pills.

Match the number of pills missed with the appropriate starting time for your type of pill pack.

If you miss one or more blue or white pills and do not have a period that month, you may be pregnant. If this happens, contact your healthcare professional.

On the days you take 2 pills to make up for missed pills, you could also feel a little sick to your stomach.

Sunday Start	Day 1 Start
Miss 1 blue Pill	
Take it as soon as you remember. Take the next pill at the usual time. This means that you might take 2 pills in one day.	
Miss 2 blue pills in a row in Week 1 or Week 2 of your pack	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take 2 pills the day you remember and 2 pills the next day. 2. Then take 1 pill each day until you finish the pack. 3. Use a back-up (barrier) method of birth control if you have sex in the 7 days after you miss the pills. 	
Miss 2 pills (blue or white) in a row in Week 3 or Week 4 of your pack or Miss 3 or more pills (blue or white) in a row at any time	

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keep taking 1 pill each day until Sunday. 2. On Sunday, safely discard the rest of the pack. Start a new pack that day. 3. Use a back-up method of birth control if you have sex in the 7 days after you miss the pills. 4. You may not have a period this month. <p>If you miss 2 periods in a row, call your healthcare professional.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safely dispose of the rest of the pill pack. 2. Start a new pack that same day. 3. Use a back-up method of birth control if you have sex in the 7 days after you miss the pills. 4. You may not have a period this month. If you miss 2 periods in a row, call your healthcare professional.
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If you forget either of the 2 lilac pills in Week 4, follow these steps:

- Throw away the pills you missed.
- Keep taking 1 pill each day until the pack is empty.
- You do not need to use a back-up method of birth control.

If you are not sure what to do about the pills you have missed:

- Use a back-up method of birth control anytime you have sex.
- Keep taking 1 blue or white pill each day until you can reach your healthcare provider.

Always be sure you have on hand:

- an extra, full pack of pills; and
- back-up methods of birth control. These are types of birth control that do not include hormones such as latex or polyurethane condoms and spermicidal foam or gel. You will need back-up birth control if you miss pills and in some other situations. Always talk to your healthcare professional if you are not sure whether you need to use back-up birth control.

What are possible side effects from using ELFY?

These are not all the possible side effects you may have when taking ELFY. If you experience any side effects not listed here, tell your healthcare professional.

- abdominal pain
- nausea
- vomiting
- weight change
- abnormal cervical (PAP) smear
- painful period cramps
- vaginal infection
- Human Papilloma Virus
- fungal infection
- urinary tract infection

- upper respiratory tract infections including bronchitis, runny nose, stuffy nose, sore throat
- influenza
- acne
- breast tenderness
- anxiety
- depression
- mood swings
- headache

Serious side effects and what to do about them			
Symptom / effect	Talk to your healthcare professional		Stop taking drug and get immediate medical help
	Only if severe	In all cases	
UNCOMMON			
Pulmonary embolism (blood clot in the lung): sharp chest pain, coughing of blood, or sudden shortness of breath			√
Deep vein thrombosis (blood clot in the leg): pain and/or swelling in the calf			√
Myocardial Infarction (heart attack): crushing chest pain or heaviness in the chest			√
Stroke: sudden severe headache or vomiting, dizziness or fainting, disturbances of vision or speech, weakness, or numbness in an arm or leg			√
Blood clot in the eye: sudden partial or complete loss of vision			√
Breast lumps		√	
Tumour in the liver: severe pain or tenderness in the stomach area			√
Depression: persistent sad mood accompanied by difficulty in sleeping, weakness, lack of energy, fatigue			√
Jaundice: yellowing of the skin or eyeballs, accompanied frequently by fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, dark-coloured urine, or light-			√

Serious side effects and what to do about them			
Symptom / effect	Talk to your healthcare professional		Stop taking drug and get immediate medical help
	Only if severe	In all cases	
coloured bowel movements			
Unexpected (abnormal) vaginal bleeding		√	
Unusual swelling of the arms and legs		√	

If you have a troublesome symptom or side effect that is not listed here or becomes bad enough to interfere with your daily activities, tell your healthcare professional.

Reporting Side Effects

You can report any suspected side effects associated with the use of health products to Health Canada by:

- Visiting the Web page on Adverse Reaction Reporting (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/medeffect-canada/adverse-reaction-reporting.html>) for information on how to report online, by mail or by fax; or
- Calling toll-free at 1-866-234-2345.

NOTE: Contact your health professional if you need information about how to manage your side effects. The Canada Vigilance Program does not provide medical advice.

Storage:

Store at 15°C – 30°C. Keep the tablets in their original package.

Do not keep medicine that is out of date or that you no longer need.

Keep out of reach and sight of children.

If you want more information about ELFY:

- Talk to your healthcare professional.
- Find the full product monograph that is prepared for healthcare professionals and includes this Patient Medication Information by visiting the Health Canada website: (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/drug-products/drug-product-database.html>); the manufacturer's website (<http://www.apotex.ca/products>), or by calling 1-800-667-4708.

This leaflet was prepared by Apotex Inc.

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