

UKMEC Category 1 – Unrestricted Use	
<p>Age – menarche to <40 years</p> <p>Parity – nulliparous and parous</p> <p>Breastfeeding – >6 months postpartum</p> <p>Postpartum – >21 days if not breastfeeding</p> <p>Post-abortion – immediately first and second trimester, and post-septic</p> <p>Past ectopic pregnancy</p> <p>History of pelvic surgery</p> <p>Minor surgery without immobilisation</p> <p>Varicose veins</p> <p>Non-migrainous headaches – mild or severe</p> <p>Epilepsy – and not using liver enzyme-inducers</p> <p>Depressive disorders</p> <p>Vaginal bleeding – unsuspecting irregular, heavy or prolonged</p> <p>Endometriosis</p> <p>Benign ovarian tumour</p> <p>Severe dysmenorrhoea</p> <p>Gestational trophoblastic neoplasia – when hCG is normal</p>	<p>Cervical ectropion</p> <p>Breast disease – benign breast disease or a family history of breast cancer</p> <p>Endometrial or ovarian cancer</p> <p>Uterine fibroids – with or without distortion of the uterine cavity</p> <p>PID – current; or past history of, with or without subsequent pregnancy</p> <p>STI – current, vaginitis or increased risk of STI</p> <p>HIV/AIDS – risk of HIV/AIDS, current HIV not using antiretroviral therapy</p> <p>Schistosomiasis, pelvic and non-pelvic tuberculosis, malaria</p> <p>Diabetes – history of gestational disease</p> <p>Thyroid disorders</p> <p>Viral hepatitis – carrier</p> <p>Anaemias – thalassaemia, iron deficiency</p> <p>Raynaud’s disease – primary without lupus anticoagulant</p>
UKMEC Category 2 – Benefits generally outweigh risks	
<p>Age – ≥40 years^a</p> <p>Breastfeeding – between 6 weeks and 6 months postpartum and partially breastfeeding (medium to low)</p> <p>Smoking – aged <35 years, or aged ≥35 years and stopped smoking ≥1 year ago</p> <p>Obesity – BMI ≥30–34 kg/m²</p> <p>History of high blood pressure during pregnancy</p> <p>Family history of VTE in a first-degree relative aged ≥45 years</p> <p>Major surgery without prolonged immobilisation</p> <p>Superficial thrombophlebitis</p> <p>Known hyperlipidaemias – e.g. common hypercholesterolaemia or familial combined hyperlipidaemia</p> <p>Valvular and congenital heart disease – uncomplicated</p> <p>Migraine headaches – without aura in women aged <35 years</p>	<p>Vaginal bleeding – suspicious for serious condition before evaluation</p> <p>CIN and cervical cancer</p> <p>HIV/AIDS – current HIV using antiretroviral therapy, or current AIDS and using HAART</p> <p>Diabetes – NIDDM and IDDM, non-vascular disease</p> <p>Gallbladder disease – asymptomatic or treated with a cholecystectomy</p> <p>History of cholestasis – pregnancy-related</p> <p>Inflammatory bowel disease</p> <p>Sickle cell disease</p> <p>Raynaud’s disease – secondary without lupus anticoagulant</p> <p>Non-liver enzyme-inducing antibiotics</p> <p>Highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART)</p>

UKMEC Category 3 – Risks generally outweigh benefits^b

Breastfeeding – between 6 weeks and 6 months postpartum and fully or almost fully breastfeeding

Postpartum – <21 days postpartum

Smoking – aged ≥35 years and smoking <15 cigarettes per day, or stopped smoking <1 year ago

Obesity – BMI 35–39 kg/m²

Cardiovascular disease – multiple risk factors for arterial cardiovascular disease

Hypertension – elevated blood pressure >140 to 159 mmHg systolic or >90 to 94 mmHg diastolic

Family history of VTE in a first-degree relative aged <45 years

Immobility (unrelated to surgery) – e.g. wheelchair use, debilitating illness

Known hyperlipidaemias – e.g. familial hypercholesterolaemia

Migraine headaches – without aura in women aged ≥35 years; or a past history of migraine with aura at any age

Breast disease – past history of breast cancer and no evidence of recurrence for 5 years; carriers of known gene mutations associated with breast cancer (e.g. BRCA1); undiagnosed mass

Diabetes – with nephropathy/retinopathy/neuropathy; or other vascular disease or diabetes of >20 years' duration (category given will depend on disease severity)

Gallbladder disease – symptomatic medically treated or current

History of cholestasis – past COC-related

Cirrhosis – mild compensated disease

Drugs which induce liver enzymes – e.g. rifampicin, rifabutin, St John's Wort, griseofulvin and certain anticonvulsants (i.e. phenytoin, carbamazepine, barbiturates, primidone, topiramate, oxcarbazepine)

UKMEC Category 4 – Unacceptable health risk and should not be used

Breastfeeding – <6 weeks postpartum

Smoking – aged ≥35 years and smoking ≥15 cigarettes per day

Obesity – BMI ≥40 kg/m²

Cardiovascular disease – multiple risk factors for arterial cardiovascular disease

Hypertension – blood pressure ≥160 mmHg systolic and/ or ≥95 mmHg diastolic; or vascular disease

VTE – current (on anticoagulants) or past history

Major surgery with prolonged immobilisation

Known thrombogenic mutations

Current and history of ischaemic heart disease

Stroke

Valvular and congenital heart disease – complicated by pulmonary hypertension, atrial fibrillation, history of subacute bacterial endocarditis

Migraine headaches – with aura at any age

Gestational trophoblastic neoplasia – when hCG is abnormal

Breast disease – current breast cancer

Diabetes – with nephropathy, retinopathy, neuropathy or other vascular disease, or diabetes of >20 years' duration (category given will depend on disease severity)

Viral hepatitis – active disease

Cirrhosis – severe decompensated disease

Liver tumours – benign and malignant

Raynaud's disease – secondary with lupus anticoagulant and thus a tendency to thrombosis

a Age ≥40 years: women may use COC until age 50 years if there are no medical contraindications.

b Definition of UKMEC 3 – the risks generally outweigh the benefits but the method can be considered for use with clinical judgement and/ or specialist referral if other methods are unacceptable.

AIDS, acquired immune deficiency syndrome; **BMI**, body mass

index; **CIN**, cervical intraepithelial neoplasia; **HAART**, highly active antiretroviral therapy; **hCG**, human chorionic gonadotrophin; **HIV**, human immunodeficiency virus; **IDDM**, insulin-dependent diabetes; **NIDDM**, non-insulin-dependent diabetes; **PID**, pelvic inflammatory disease; **STI**, sexually transmitted infection; **TB**, tuberculosis; **VTE**, venous thromboembolism.