

# FACTS ABOUT EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION PILLS (EC)

## Who is Emergency Contraception (EC) for?

EC is for a woman who:

- had sex without using birth control **OR** had trouble using her regular method (missed pills, broken condom, overdue for your Depo-Provera shot, diaphragm or cervical cap slipped, miscalculated fertile days etc.)

**AND**

- does **NOT** want to get pregnant.

## What is EC?

EC comes in different forms

- Plan B<sup>®</sup> One-Step EC, Next Choice One Dose and My Way is 1 pill (1.5mg) that contains the same hormone used in many birth control pills (called levonorgestrel).
- Levonorgestrel is 2 pills (0.75 mg each) that contains the same hormone used in many birth control pills.
- ella<sup>®</sup> is 1 pill (30 mg) that contains a progesterone receptor modulator (called ulipristal acetate).

These types of EC are sometimes called "the morning after pill."

Another EC option is:

- A Copper-T Intrauterine Device (IUD) (can be kept in place for long-term contraception)

## How does EC work?

- If you are already pregnant, EC will not work.
- Take EC up to 3 to 5 days after having unprotected sex. It is better to take it sooner than later. EC is not 100% effective.
- Emergency insertion of a copper T intrauterine device within 5 days after having unprotected sex.
- EC does **NOT** have to be taken in the morning. A woman can take it any time **AND** should take it as soon as she can.

## EC will:

- **NOT** protect you from sexually transmitted infections (STI) or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- **NOT** be effective if you are already pregnant.
- **NOT** cause harm if you are already pregnant.

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## How do I take EC?

Take the EC pill or pills within three (72 hours) to five days (120 hours) of having unprotected sex then the second dose 12 hours later depending on the EC. If there is only one step, only one dose of EC will be taken. Follow the instructions of your healthcare provider.

## How well does EC work?

EC is not 100% effective. It works best the sooner you take it. If taken up to 3-5 days after unprotected sex, it can prevent pregnancy about 75-89% of the time. EC is not intended to be used for ongoing birth control.

## After taking EC pills, some women:

- Have nausea with possible vomiting
- Have stomach pain, sore breasts, headaches, dizziness and tiredness

A single dose of anti-nausea medicine (Dramamine, Benadryl or Bonine) taken 1 hour before the first dose of emergency contraception has been shown to decrease the severity of the nausea.

If you throw up within two hours of the first or second dose, you will need to repeat the dose.

## How will I know they worked?

You should get your period a month (or sooner) after taking EC. **If you do not get your period in a month, take a pregnancy test and talk with your health care provider.**

## What if I want birth control after EC?

You can start another method of birth control immediately after taking EC. Ask your provider about starting or continuing a routine birth control method.

\*Hand this sheet to your pharmacist if you do not receive your EC at the clinic.\*

You can get EC at the pharmacy without a prescription or at your county health department family planning clinic or doctor's office.

**I need Emergency Contraception**