
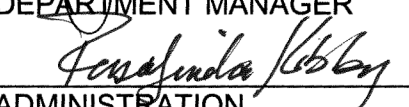


POLICY AND PROCEDURE

NUMBER: 7231-027	REVIEWED AND REVISED: 08/28/2023	EFFECTIVE DATE: 08/10/2015	SUPERSEDES NO./DATE: 11/29/2018
DISTRIBUTION: ED, Nursing Administration, Administration			
SUBJECT: EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION & PATIENT EDUCATION		APPROVED BY:  DEPARTMENT MANAGER  ADMINISTRATION	

POLICY:

The purpose of emergency contraception (Plan B) is to prevent pregnancy following a sexual assault. By Washington State Law, every hospital providing emergency care for sexual assault patients must:

1. Provide information about emergency contraception
2. Inform each patient of her option to be provided with this medication, and
3. If not medically contraindicated provide emergency contraception immediately
4. Standing order for plan B per ER Medical Director if ER Provider has reservations/personal conflict with prescribing Plan B to patients.

PROCEDURE:

1. Obtain a urine pregnancy test on all females 10 to 55 years of age, except if hysterectomy or tubal ligation. Proceed only if test is negative.

Offer emergency contraception when:

- a. Assault occurred within 5 days prior to presentation, and
 - b. Patient is at risk for pregnancy, and
 - c. Patient is not using a highly reliable method of contraception
 - d. Patient feels any pregnancy conceived in the last five days would be undesirable to continue, and
 - e. Pregnancy test is negative
2. Provide both verbal and written education regarding Plan B to the patient. (see attachment)
 3. Obtain informed consent. Have the patient or patient's legal guardian sign consent.
 4. Inform the patient that her menstrual period should begin within the next 2-3 weeks. She should see her Primary Care Physician and/or Family Planning for a pregnancy test and exam, if no menstruation within 3 weeks after treatment.
 5. Give both Plan B pills in the Emergency Department (ED). Mild nausea may occur, but is uncommon.



Emergency contraception

Emergency contraception can help keep you from getting pregnant if you had sex without using birth control or if your birth control method did not work. Emergency contraception is also called the “morning after pill.” But you do not need to wait until the morning after unprotected sex to take it. There are two types of FDA-approved emergency contraceptive pills (ECPs). Some ECPs can work when taken within five days of unprotected sex or when your birth control does not work correctly. Some ECPs are available without a prescription.

Q: What types of emergency contraception pills are available?

A: In the United States, there are two types of FDA-approved ECPs available for emergency contraception:

- **ella**® (ulipristal acetate)
- **Plan B One-Step**® (Levonorgestral [LNG]) — Plan B One-Step® has several generic versions. Some common generic versions include AfterPill®, My Way®, Next Choice One Dose®, and Take Action®.

Q: How do I get emergency contraception?

A: It depends on the type of emergency contraception you need.

- **Plan B One-Step**® and similar generic versions are available in stores without a prescription to anyone, of any age. If you do not see it on the shelf, ask the pharmacist for help.
- **LNG** tablets (two-pill generic Next Choice® and LNG tablets, 0.75 mg) are available to people aged 17 and older without a prescription. These brands are sold from behind the pharmacy counter.
- **ella**® is available only by prescription from your doctor, nurse, or family planning clinic.

Q: How quickly should I use emergency contraception after unprotected sex?

A: Emergency contraception works best when you use it **as soon as possible** after unprotected sex. If you are unable to take it right away, emergency contraception can still work to prevent pregnancy if taken up to three to five days after unprotected sex. How long after depends on which type of emergency contraception you use.

- Take **Plan B One-Step**® or a generic version as soon as possible **within three days** (or 72 hours) after unprotected sex.
- For the two-dose version (Next Choice®, LNG tablets, 0.75 mg), take one pill as soon as possible **within three days** and the second pill **12 hours later**.
- Take **ella**® (**ulipristal acetate**) as soon as possible **within five days** (or 120 hours) after unprotected sex.

Q: How do emergency contraception pills prevent pregnancy?

A: Research shows that emergency contraception pills work mostly by preventing or delaying ovulation (the release of an egg from the ovary). Less commonly, emergency contraception may prevent fertilization of the egg by the sperm if ovulation has already happened. If a fertilized egg has already implanted in your uterus (you are pregnant), emergency contraception pills will not stop or harm your pregnancy.

Q: Can I get emergency contraception pills before I need them?

A: Yes. Your doctor can give you a prescription to fill so you can have emergency contraception at home to use when you need it. Or you can buy some types of emergency contraception pills from a store at any time.

Q: How can I get free or low-cost emergency contraception?

A: Under the Affordable Care Act (the health care law), most insurance plans cover FDA-approved emergency contraception and birth control at no cost to you. This includes Plan B One-Step® and ella®. Since you can buy Plan B One-Step® or the generic version in a store, without a prescription, call your insurance company to find out whether your plan covers over-the-counter emergency contraception.

- If you have insurance, check with your insurance provider to find out what's included in your plan.

- If you have Medicaid, your insurance may cover emergency contraception. Coverage varies between states, so check with your state's Medicaid program to learn what your benefits are.
- If you don't have insurance, don't panic. Family planning or health clinics like Planned Parenthood may provide emergency contraception for free or at low cost. Call your local clinic to learn more. To sign up for low-cost or no-cost health insurance, visit HealthCare.gov.

For information about other services covered by the Affordable Care Act, visit HealthCare.gov.

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For more information...

For more information on emergency contraception, call the OWH Helpline at 800-994-9662 or contact the following organizations:

- **Food and Drug Administration (FDA), HHS**
Phone Number: 888-463-6332
www.fda.gov/
- **Office of Population Affairs (OPA), HHS**
Phone Number: 240-453-2888
www.hhs.gov/opa/
- **Planned Parenthood Federation of America**
Phone Number: 800-230-7526
www.plannedparenthood.org/
- **The Emergency Contraception Website**
ec.princeton.edu/

The Office on Women's Health is grateful for the additional reviews by:

- Food and Drug Administration, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Division of Bone, Reproductive and Urologic Products staff
- James Trussell, Ph.D., Professor of Economics and Public Affairs, Emeritus, Senior Demographer, Office of Population Research, Princeton University

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Emergency Contraception (EC)

Emergency contraception (EC) is used to prevent a pregnancy after a woman has had unprotected sex. EC prevents pregnancy in different ways. It may:

- Prevent the egg from leaving the ovary
- Stop the sperm from reaching the egg
- Keep the fertilized egg from attaching to the uterus

EC is sometimes called the “morning after pill.” But this name is misleading. Some types of EC can work up to 5 days after having sex, not just the morning after. EC is not an abortion pill. It doesn't work if you're already pregnant. If you are overweight or obese, certain types of EC may not work as well for you. Talk with your healthcare provider about your options.

When to use EC

You may want to use EC in any of the following types of cases:

- You had sex without birth control (unprotected sex).
- You were forced to have sex.
- You were using a condom but it broke or came off.
- You forgot to take your pill or missed your shot.
- You suspect that your ring, patch, diaphragm, cervical cap, sponge, or spermicide was not used correctly.
- You use the natural family planning method and had unprotected sex at a time when you are likely to become pregnant. (This is usually week 2 of a 4-week cycle, if your periods are regular.)
- You were using the withdrawal method, and your partner didn't pull out in time.
- Your IUD came out.
- You think your regular birth control method failed.

Note: EC does not protect you from sexually transmitted infections (STIs). To protect against STIs when having sex, you must always use a condom. This is true even when you use another method of birth control.

Types of EC

Oral medicine

- Levonorgestrel (available over the counter)
- Ulipristal acetate (prescription only)
- A high dose of certain brands of birth control pills (BCPs) can also be used as EC. Talk with your provider to learn more about this option. BCPs require a prescription.

EC can cause side effects in some women. These can include nausea, vomiting, sore breasts, and headaches. If needed, you can buy medicine over the counter or prescribed to help prevent nausea and vomiting. Talk with a healthcare provider or a pharmacist to learn more.

Insertion of a copper intrauterine device (IUD)

- When an IUD is used as a form of EC, it must be placed into the uterus by a trained healthcare provider within 5 days after having unprotected sex. The IUD can be removed after your next period. Or it can be left in place for ongoing birth control. Talk with your provider to learn more.

How well EC works

When used correctly, EC works very well to prevent pregnancy. It's most effective when taken as soon as possible after unprotected sex or suspected failure of birth control. Ideally, EC should be taken within 72 hours. But it can be

used up to 120 hours after sex. Ask your provider or pharmacist for details on exactly how well different types of EC work.

Home care

- Take EC exactly as directed.
- If you don't get your period in 3 weeks, use a home pregnancy test or see a healthcare provider to find out if you are pregnant.
- If you have sex before your next period starts, be sure to use another birth control method.
- If you are not using birth control regularly, see a healthcare to learn more about your options. You may also go to a local family planning clinic.
- Don't rely on EC as a form of regular birth control.

Follow-up care

Follow up with your healthcare provider, if needed.

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if any of these occur:

- You throw up (vomit) within 3 hours of taking EC.
- You have severe side effects from taking EC.
- You have fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as advised by your provider.
- You have irregular vaginal bleeding.
- You have heavy vaginal bleeding. This means soaking 1 pad an hour for 3 hours.
- You feel weak, dizzy, or faint when standing.

Resources

To learn more about EC, visit:

[Office on Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov) or call 800-994-9662

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