



*This publication was supported by a grant from the Program on Reproductive Health and Rights of the Open Society Institute.*

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ISBN: 0-913843-30-X

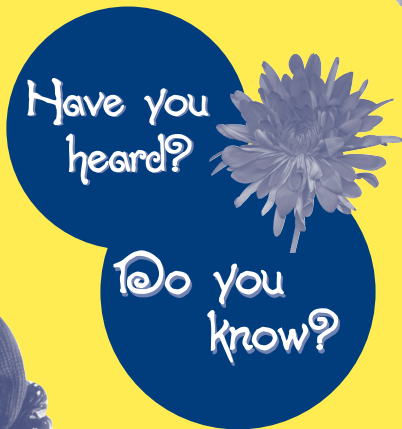


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# An Emergency Option for Preventing Pregnancy after Sex

A Brochure  
by and for  
Young Women



We have a birth control option that can be used **AFTER** unprotected sex!

**EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILLS...**  
learn how to safely prevent pregnancy -- up to five days **AFTER** unprotected sex!!!

## Surprised

You're not alone! Most women – young and old alike – don't know that emergency contraceptive pills exist. And, of the few women who know that they exist, most don't know that emergency contraceptive pills are a birth control method to be used AFTER unprotected sex!\*\*

Read on...

I Have Never Heard of Emergency Contraceptive Pills! What Are They?

Emergency contraceptive pills are also known as the *morning-after pill* and *postcoital contraception*, but the term *emergency contraceptive pills* is more accurate because they can be used any time up to 120 hours after unprotected sex.

\*\* Vaginal, oral, and anal intercourse are all "sex." Because emergency contraception can only prevent pregnancy, "unprotected sex" in this pamphlet is only talking about "unprotected vaginal intercourse." If you have sex of any kind without using a condom, you may be at risk of infection with STDs, including HIV. Consider getting tested for STDs. Call the toll-free, confidential 24-hour National STD and AIDS Hotlines, 1-800-342-2437, for information about STDs and referral to free or low-cost clinics near you.

## The Facts— Emergency Contraceptive Pills Are ...

- Birth control – an opportunity to *prevent* pregnancy and the need for abortion
- Preven™ and Plan B™—the only two brand name products sold as emergency contraception in the U.S.
- Safe and effective. Emergency contraceptive pills are simply "regular" birth control pills, but the amount of hormone in each pill and the dose is different. Visit <http://www.not-2late.com> for a list of regular birth control pills that can be used for emergency contraception.
- For infrequent use only
- Taken up to five days (120 hours) *after* unprotected sex!!!
- A method of *preventing pregnancy*.
- *Not* abortion
- *Not* Mifeprex™ (commonly known as the "abortion pill" or RU 486)
- *Not* harmful for you and they don't cause birth defects if you're already pregnant
- *Not* recommended for routine use because they're less effective than some other birth control methods
- *Not* taken *before* unprotected sex
- *Not* a method of preventing STDs (sexually transmitted diseases), including HIV.



My boyfriend and I had sex on a Saturday night. We were using protection, but the condom broke! I was scared out of my mind. I wasn't ready to have a kid yet and I didn't know what to do! I told my best friend on Sunday morning and she had heard an ad on the radio about something called emergency contraception that could be taken up to five days after sex.

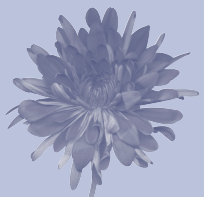
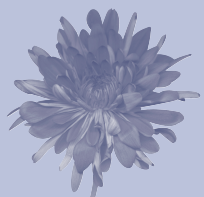
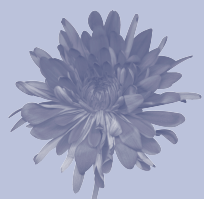


## How Do Emergency Contraceptive Pills Work?

Emergency contraceptive pills should be taken within five days (120 hours) after unprotected sex – with the first dose taken *as soon as possible*. The pills may still be somewhat effective even after 120 hours, so you may still be able to take them after the 120-hour time frame to reduce your risk of getting pregnant.

*Emergency contraceptive pills do not cause abortion!*

**In fact, experts agree that, because emergency contraception prevents pregnancy, it reduces the need for abortion. At the same time, taking emergency contraceptive pills involves making a decision based on your own beliefs. So think carefully and talk to others who may help you decide. Then, make your own decision.**



Neither one of us knew much about it, but I decided to try to find out where and how to get it.

I called the student health center, but they were closed on Sunday. There was, however, a message on their answering machine telling me about the Emergency Contraception Hotline, 1-888-NOT-2-LATE.

## I Don't Want to Become Pregnant... When Should I Consider Taking Emergency Contraceptive Pills?

If you have had unprotected sex and don't want to become pregnant, you may be scared, confused, and overwhelmed. But remember – you can take emergency contraceptive pills when:

- The condom broke, leaked, or slipped off!
- He didn't "pull out" in time!
- Neither one of you used birth control!
- You realize you started your new pack of birth control pills more than two days late!
- You realize you missed taking your birth control pills for two or more days!
- You missed the deadline for your Depo shot (contraceptive injection)!
- Your diaphragm or cervical cap was inserted wrong, slipped out of place, was removed too soon, or was torn!
- You miscalculated your *safe days*!
- You were raped or sexually assaulted or forced to have sex!



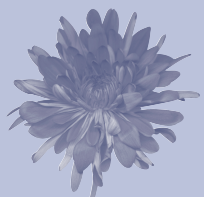
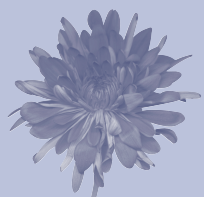
By this time, I knew that I was running out of time! I was feeling panicked, so I asked my best friend to call the hotline for me. It really made me feel better to have someone there with me. The hotline gave us names of five health care providers near me who provide emergency contraception.

## How and Where Can I Get Emergency Contraceptive Pills - When I Need Them?

If you have had unprotected sex in the past five days (120 hours) and are trying to get emergency contraception, chances are you're worried, maybe even panicked.

Three of the easiest, fastest ways to get a prescription for emergency contraception:

- (1) **Call your regular doctor, student health center, or local family planning clinic.**
- (2) **Call the toll-free, confidential 24-hour Emergency Contraception Hotline, 1-888-NOT-2-LATE, or visit <http://www.not-2-late.com> to find someone near you who provides emergency contraception.**
- (3) **Call 1-800-230-PLAN or visit <http://www.teenwire.org> for the nearest Planned Parenthood clinic.**



First thing Monday morning, I called the first doctor on the list. I told the person who answered the phone, "I was wondering about getting emergency contraceptive pills." She wasn't quite sure what I was talking about, so I asked to speak directly to a nurse or doctor. Thankfully, the nurse knew exactly what I wanted!

If you call a doctor, clinic, or hospital emergency room requesting emergency contraceptive pills and are told "no," don't become discouraged. Remember ...

- You have a right to information and to have your questions about emergency contraception answered.
- You're acting responsibly. You're looking for emergency contraception to avoid becoming pregnant.

Just keep on calling!!! Or, ask your boyfriend, best friend, parent, or another trusted adult to call for you.



## How and Where Can I Get Emergency Contraceptive Pills - Before I Need Them?

Having emergency contraceptive pills before you need them is really important because you may not be able to find someone who can prescribe them when you need them – especially at night, on weekends, or when you're out of town. It can be easier – especially on your emotions – to get them *before you need them!*

Plus, if you get emergency contraceptive pills before you need them, you'll ...

- Be prepared to take them when you need them.
- Be able to talk with your boyfriend, friends, and/or parents about using emergency contraception as “backup birth control.”
- Be able to schedule an appointment with a trustworthy, affordable, and conveniently located doctor at a time that is good for you.
- Actually have emergency contraception on hand *just in case!*

So, schedule an appointment today and ask for emergency contraceptive pills! Some doctors will give you the pills right away and others will give you a prescription for them. If you are given a prescription for emergency contraceptive pills, go to the pharmacy to fill it right away. If and when you need to take the emergency contraception, be sure to check the expiration date!

## How Much Will I Have to Pay?

Emergency contraceptive pills cost between \$8 and \$25 – as little as a new CD. You may also have to pay for an appointment. Fortunately, most family planning clinics offer discounts or free services to teens. Some doctors may provide a prescription for emergency contraceptive pills right over the phone, especially if you're already a patient!

You do not *need* a pelvic exam and/or pregnancy test before getting a prescription for these pills. However, some doctors may insist on doing a pelvic exam and/or pregnancy test before providing a prescription.



I had a lot of questions since I wasn't quite sure what emergency contraceptive pills were. Do I need a pelvic exam or pregnancy test? How much will I have to pay? Will my parents have to give their consent or will they be notified that I received the pills? The nurse was able to answer all of my questions!

## What Will Happen When I Take Emergency Contraceptive Pills?

Emergency contraceptive pills may make you nauseous, dizzy, or tired. You may vomit and have a headache and sore breasts. These side effects are temporary and should last less than a day or two.

### Helpful Hints:

- (1) Take motion sickness pills, like Dramamine II before taking the emergency contraceptive pills.
- (2) Take the pills with food.
- (3) Take your first dose mid-morning and your second dose (12 hours later) right about bedtime.

It's normal for your next period to be a few days late or early. It may be heavier, lighter, or more spotty than usual. If your period doesn't come, you should take a pregnancy test.



## Is Emergency Contraception Effective?

Yes – especially the sooner you take them after unprotected sex. Emergency contraceptive pills can reduce *your* risk of pregnancy by 75-94 percent.


### Remember:

Emergency contraceptive pills provide no protection against STDs, including HIV, and are less effective than some other forms of birth control. Using regular birth control pills *and* condoms, or combining the contraceptive injection (Depo-Provera) *with* condoms, is the best way to prevent pregnancy *and* STDs.



Then, she had questions for me. When did my last period start? When did I have unprotected sex? Was this the only time I had unprotected sex since my last period? When was my last pelvic exam?

The nurse gave me an appointment for Monday mid-day - 36 hours after the condom broke...



## Can I Get Emergency Contraception without My Parents' Knowledge or Consent If I Am under 18?

**Yes. But,** some doctors may require your parent's consent before (or after) they give you a prescription – even though they may not be required to do so by law. If you are concerned about your parents finding out, ask the doctor if the emergency contraception *and* appointment are *confidential*.

If you contact a provider who requires your parents' consent, ask for a referral to another doctor who will provide confidential services. Or, you may want to call 1-800-230-PLAN for the nearest Planned Parenthood clinic. All Planned Parenthood clinics provide confidential services to teens.

Also, be aware that if you use your parent's health insurance, your parent will probably receive an information form or a bill for the emergency contraception and related services.

## What Can I Do Now that I Know About Emergency Contraception?

Now that you know about emergency contraceptive pills, spread the word!!!

- Tell your friends, write a column for your school or local newspaper, and educate your school's nurses, guidance counselors, health education teachers, and class advisors.
- Find out if student health center provides emergency contraceptive pills. If not, start a petition and/or organize a demonstration to call attention to the fact that emergency contraception isn't available.
- Make a presentation at a meeting of people who should know about emergency contraception, such as your school's student government association, school board meeting, parent-teacher association (PTA), etc.



What a relief ... finding out about emergency contraception really saved me! Now I feel like other girls should know so I've become involved in letting people know about emergency contraception!

*I share my story whenever I get the chance!!!*

Christy, age 17, Illinois



Sixty-five percent of all U.S. teens have had sexual intercourse by the time they graduate from high school.<sup>1</sup>



More than one in five women report having experienced forced sexual intercourse, and about 72 percent of these women were under age 20 at the time of the experience.<sup>2</sup>

In the United States each year, as many as 900,000 teens become pregnant and nearly 80 percent of teen pregnancies are unintended.<sup>3,4,5</sup>



Emergency contraceptive pills could annually avert as many as 50 percent of unintended pregnancies and consequent abortions among American teens.<sup>6</sup>



For more information, check out these Web sites!

- <http://www.not-2-late.com> – provides accurate information about emergency contraception and a directory of providers in your area.
- <http://www.teenwire.org> - gives great information on emergency contraception, safer sex, and more. And, gives referrals to local Planned Parenthood clinics.
- <http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu> – has loads of questions and answers on all kinds of relationship and sexual health issues, including emergency contraceptive pills.
- <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org> – provides great information about sexual health issues as well as a fact sheet about emergency contraception to give to school personnel and/or parents.

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