

## Facts About Emergency Contraception Pills

### 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, etc.)

### AND

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

### What is EC?

EC comes in different forms

- Levonorgestrel EC (1.5 mg pill, sold as Plan B One-Step, My Way, Take Action, and other generic brands) contains the same hormone used in many birth control pills. This option is sold over-the-counter (OTC), without a prescription for anyone of any age. There's no longer an age restriction and no need to show ID.
- Ulipristal acetate EC (1 30 mg pill, sold as ella®) contains a progesterone receptor modulator. This option is available only with a prescription.
- These types of EC are sometimes called "the morning after pill."
- There are some other EC options, too.
  - Some types of daily combined birth control pills can be used as EC. The number of pills you need to take depends on the type of pill.
  - A Copper-T Intrauterine Device (IUD) is the most effective form of EC.
  - Go to [www.not-2-late.com](http://www.not-2-late.com) to learn more about these other forms of emergency contraception.

### How does EC work?

- If you are already pregnant, EC will not work.
- **Take EC as soon as possible after having unprotected sex. EC may work up to 5 days (120 hours) after you've had unprotected sex. The sooner you take EC the more likely it is to work.**
- 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:

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***I need Emergency Contraception***

- **NOT** protect you from sexually transmitted infections or HIV/AIDS.
- **NOT** be effective if you are already pregnant.
- **NOT** cause harm if you are already pregnant.

## How do I take EC?

- Take the EC pill or pills as soon as possible!

## Remember

EC may work up to 5 days (120 hours) after you've had unprotected sex, but it is best to take it as soon as possible after unprotected sex.

## Where can I get EC?

- You can get Plan B® One-Step, My Way, Take Action, or other generic brands without a prescription from most drugstores. It should be sold right on pharmacy shelves, but some stores still stock it behind the pharmacy counter. You should NOT be asked for ID to buy this kind of EC. If someone asks you for ID or refuses to sell you EC, please contact the American Society for Emergency Contraception.
- Typically, when you get OTC EC without a prescription it isn't covered by insurance. If you get a prescription from a clinician, it is possible that it will be covered. Each plan is different, so contact your insurance company to find out if, and under what conditions, it is covered.
- Women of all ages need a prescription from a healthcare professional to get ella.
- Family planning clinics, like Planned Parenthood

([www.plannedparenthood.com](http://www.plannedparenthood.com)), may give you EC for less money than drugstores. Call your local clinic to see if it has EC.

- To find health care professionals near you who will give you a prescription for EC, go to [www.not-2-late.com](http://www.not-2-late.com).

## After taking EC pills, some women:

- feel sick to their stomach
- feel like throwing up (vomiting)
- are dizzy or tired
- have stomach pain, sore breasts, or headaches

If you throw up after taking the pills, call your doctor or pharmacist. You should get your period a month (or sooner) after taking EC. **If you don't get your period in a month, take a pregnancy test and talk with your health care provider.**

EC provides a second chance to prevent pregnancy if you had sex without birth control or had problems using your regular method. After you use EC, talk with your health care professional to find the best type of birth control for you to use as a regular method in the future.

Compare emergency contraception to other birth control options using ARHP's Method Match at [www.arhp.org/MethodMatch](http://www.arhp.org/MethodMatch).

For more information about EC access in the pharmacy, read this fact sheet from the American Society for Emergency Contraception: [americansocietyforec.org/uploads/3/4/5/6/34568220/pharmacy\\_ec\\_access\\_overview.pdf](http://americansocietyforec.org/uploads/3/4/5/6/34568220/pharmacy_ec_access_overview.pdf).

Your Post-Sex Guide to NOT Getting Pregnant, Updated March 2018

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