



Patient Instructions for Emergency Contraception

Created by the Massachusetts Emergency Contraception Network

What is emergency contraception?

Emergency contraception can prevent pregnancy when taken within 120 hours (5 days) of unprotected sex. It can be used if you did not use a birth control method, if you think you have used birth control incorrectly (for example, you forgot to take your pills), if the birth control failed (for example, the condom broke or slipped off), or you were forced to have sex.

Emergency contraception works by preventing the pregnancy from starting. It reduces the risk of pregnancy by more than 75%. If you are already pregnant, it will not end your pregnancy.

Your health care provider has prescribed one of the following for you:

Name of pills	Pills for 1 st dose (take within 120 hours of unprotected sex)	Pills for 2 nd dose (take 12 hours after 1 st dose)
Plan B	1 white pill	1 white pill
Ovral or Ogestrel	2 white pills	2 white pills
Levlen or Nordette	4 light orange pills	4 light orange pills
Levora, Lo/Ovral or LowOgestrel	4 white pills	4 white pills
Alesse or Levlite	5 pink pills	5 pink pills
Triphasil or Tri-Levlen	4 yellow pills	4 yellow pills
Trivora	4 pink pills	4 pink pills
Ovrette	20 yellow pills	20 yellow pills

How do I take emergency contraception?

- ✍ Take the first dose of pills as soon as possible after unprotected sex
- ✍ Take the second dose of pills 12 hours after the 1st dose
- ✍ You may be able to take both doses of Plan B at the same time. Ask your health care provider if this is possible.
- ✍ Your health care provider may suggest an anti-nausea medicine called _____ to take before taking emergency contraceptive pills

Other things about emergency contraception:

- ✍ If your next period doesn't come within 3 weeks of taking emergency contraception please return to the clinic for a pregnancy test.
- ✍ Common side effects are nausea/vomiting, abdominal cramping, breast tenderness, irregular vaginal spotting or bleeding.
- ✍ Emergency contraception does **not** protect against HIV or STDs. Using a condom every time you have sex can help protect against STDs including HIV.
- ✍ **If you have unprotected sex after using emergency contraception, you may become pregnant.** Until you get your next period, use condoms or other method recommended by your health care provider. Talk to your provider about a regular, effective birth control method that you can continue or begin with your next period.