



Pharmacy Access Action Kit

Thank you for visiting your local pharmacist to encourage him/her to participate in the new EC pharmacy access program.

3 Easy Action Steps:

- 1) Ask to speak to the pharmacist at your local pharmacy.
- 2) Ask your pharmacist the 3 questions below and give him/her the last page of this packet: "EC Info for Pharmacists".
- 3) Record the pharmacist's responses and report back to NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts. You may do this by returning the following tracking form or by completing an online survey at www.prochoicemass.org.

Questions for Pharmacists:

1. **Do you currently stock Plan B?**
 - a. If yes, "that's great," and continue to question #2.
 - b. If no, "may I ask why you don't stock Plan B?" Thank them for their time and leave the "EC Info for Pharmacists" flyer. Report their response to the EC Network.
 2. **Have you heard about the new EC pharmacy access law? It allows pharmacists to dispense EC directly to women who walk in without a prescription under a standing order from a physician.**
 - a. If yes, "that's great" continue to question #3.
 - b. If no, "this is an important program for the women who live in our community because it means women can get EC sooner, when it's most effective at preventing pregnancy." Continue to question #3.
 3. **Would you be interested in participating in the EC pharmacy access program or in getting more information?**
 - a. If yes, "thank you. Someone from the EC Network will follow up with you soon, but here is some information and resources." Give him/her the "EC Info for Pharmacists" flyer and be sure to get the pharmacist's name.
 - b. If they are already participating, say "thank you" and report to the EC Network.
 - c. If no, ask "may I ask why not?" Report their response to the EC Network.
- Thank the pharmacist for taking time out of his or her busy schedule to speak with you. Be sure to leave behind the "EC Info for Pharmacists" flyer.

Important Information:

- Monday is not a good day to visit your pharmacist because this is usually a busy day.
- Ask to speak to the pharmacist or pharmacy manager. Often times, pharmacy clerks or technicians are the first staff you encounter.
- Introduce yourself to the pharmacist. Explain that you live in the community and are interested in talking with local pharmacists about the new EC law.
- Say that you are working with the Massachusetts EC Network which supports the law.
- If you encounter a pharmacist who refuses to fill prescriptions for EC based on personal beliefs, please be respectful of the pharmacist and thank him or her for their time.
- If asked, let the pharmacist know that this is not a formal survey. We're just reaching out to pharmacists to encourage them to participate in the new EC law.

Pharmacy Visit Tracking Form

Your name: _____ Date of visit: _____

Your email: _____

Your address: _____

Pharmacy name: _____

Pharmacy address: _____

Pharmacy phone and/or email (if available): _____

Who did you speak to? (circle one)

Pharmacist Pharmacy Clerk Pharmacy Technician Other

Name: _____

1. Does the pharmacy stock Plan B? Yes or No

If no, why not? _____

2. Has the pharmacist heard about the new EC pharmacy access law? Yes or No

3. Are they interested in participating in the EC pharmacy access program?

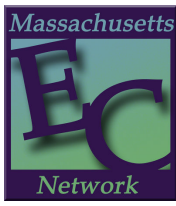
Yes No Already Participating

If not, why not? _____

Did you leave the "EC Info for Pharmacists" flyer with the pharmacist? Yes or No

Additional notes or follow up:

- Please enter your answers in the online survey at www.prochoicemass.org. Or, you may send this form to Heather Geldhof at Heather@ProChoiceMass.org, fax it to 617-338-2532, or mail it to NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts, 41 Winter Street, Suite 65, Boston, MA 02108. You can also reach Heather by phone at 617-556-8800 x13.



Key Facts about Emergency Contraceptive Pills for Women and their Partners

Emergency Contraception is a safe and effective way to prevent pregnancy after sex.

You can use emergency contraception if:

- you didn't use birth control, or
- your birth control method didn't work, or
- you were forced to have sex.

What are Emergency Contraceptive Pills (ECPs)?

Emergency contraceptive pills prevent pregnancy by stopping an egg from leaving the ovary, stopping the sperm from reaching the egg, or stopping a fertilized egg from attaching in the uterus. There are two types of ECPs:

- Plan B™ (1 pill per dose)
- High doses of regular birth control pills (number of pills you take depends on which birth control pill you use)

Pills should be started within 120 hours (five days)* after unprotected sex – but the sooner the better.

ECPs work best when the first dose is taken within 72 hours (3 days). If you take ECPs within 3 days they are 75-89 percent effective at stopping a pregnancy from occurring. If you take ECPs between 3 and 5 days after unprotected sex, they are still more than 70 percent effective at preventing pregnancy. The sooner you start ECPs, the better they work to prevent pregnancy.

Emergency contraceptive pills require two doses:

- Take the first dose as soon as possible after unprotected intercourse. Take the second dose 12 hours later.
- You may be able to take both doses of Plan B at the same time. Ask your healthcare provider if this is possible.

Women can keep pills at home in case of emergency.

You can get a prescription for emergency contraception ahead of time to keep at home in case you need it. Ask your health care provider.

Won't cause an abortion.

- Emergency contraceptive pills are **NOT** the same as RU-486 (the abortion pill).
- Emergency contraceptive pills do not cause an abortion.

Won't harm an existing pregnancy.

- ECPs won't harm your pregnancy if you take them by mistake when you are already pregnant
- Using emergency contraceptive pills will not affect your ability to get pregnant in the future.

Side effects are mild.

- Half of women who use high doses of regular birth control pills for emergency contraception feel nauseous, but only for about one day. Nausea and vomiting are much less common with Plan B. You can take an over-the-counter medicine such as Dramamine, or ask your health care provider for suggestions or a prescription to help with nausea.
- Your next period may be earlier or later than usual. Flow may be heavier, lighter, or the same as usual.

Medical follow up after taking Emergency Contraceptive Pills.

- If you do not have a normal period within 3 weeks, take a home pregnancy test or visit a healthcare provider to test for pregnancy.
- Visit your provider if you want to start a regular birth control method or need services to prevent or test for sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.
- For regular, long-term use, other contraceptive methods are more effective.
- Emergency contraceptive pills do not protect against sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.

For more information on emergency contraception contact the Massachusetts EC Network at www.MassEcNetwork.org or the national hotline at 1.888.NOT-2-LATE



EC Information for Pharmacists

Help your patients back up their birth control with EC

Emergency contraception (EC) is a safe and effective way to prevent pregnancy after unprotected sex. EC can be used up to 5 days after unprotected sex, but the sooner it is used, the more effective it is. EC is not the abortion pill (mifepristone or RU-486).

Massachusetts law now allows pharmacists to dispense EC under a standing order from a physician to women who come into the pharmacy without a prescription.

What are the benefits of providing EC services in a pharmacy?

- Pharmacies offer a great opportunity for immediate access to EC in urgent situations.
- Wider availability of EC lets pharmacies play a bigger role in promoting community health and reducing the rate of unintended pregnancy.
- Pharmacies can play a role in referring women to primary care and family planning services for ongoing birth control, STD prevention, and other health care.

Signing up to participate is as easy as 1 – 2 – 3!

1) Complete a training program

- Online training available through Northeastern University at http://www.neu.ceedutest.com/ce_ec/.
- Or go to the Massachusetts EC Network website at www.massECnetwork.org for information on live training programs.

2) Obtain a standing order

- The EC Network can connect you with a physician who is available to sign standing orders. Please contact Stacie Garnett at stacie@prochoicemass.org or 617-556-8800 x15.
- A generic standing order is also available at http://mass.gov/dph/dhcq/emergency_contraception.htm

3) File with the Board of Pharmacy and EC Network

- Send a copy of your signed standing order to the Board of Pharmacy by fax (617-973-0983) and/or mail (239 Causeway St. Ste 200, Boston, MA 02114).
- Fax the EC Network website registration form to 617-338-2532 to indicate your pharmacy participates and to be listed on the EC Network website.
- You are ready to dispense!

How can I find more information?

- Go to the EC Network website at www.massECnetwork.org or contact Stacie Garnett at stacie@prochoicemass.org or 617-556-8800 x15.

Adapted in part from Pharmacy Access Partnership (www.PharmacyAccess.org)