



# Emergency Contraception (EC)— Patient Instructions for Use



(For use if EC is provided under a standing order, as a prescription, or over-the-counter)

## Instructions:

Take the first dose of Emergency Contraception (EC) as soon as possible after unprotected sex. The medication works within the first 5 days after unprotected sex.

You have been given:

- Plan B
  - Take 1 pill as soon as possible followed by 1 pill in 12 hours
  - Take 2 pills as soon as possible

To prevent nausea, you may take \_\_\_\_\_.\* Take this medication **1 hour before** you take the first dose of EC.

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## Side effects may include:

- **Nausea**
  - EC makes some women feel sick to their stomach. You can take the recommended medication (see above \*) 1 hour before you take the first dose of EC to prevent nausea.
- **Vomiting**
  - If you throw up more than 2 hours after taking your dose of EC, do not worry, the medicine is already in your body.
  - If you throw up less than 2 hours after taking your dose of EC, call your pharmacist. You may need to take a repeat dose.
- **Tiredness, dizziness, headache, or breast tenderness**
  - These side effects should go away within a day or two.
  - You can use an over-the-counter pain reliever like Tylenol® (acetaminophen) or Motrin®/Advil® (ibuprofen) for headache or breast tenderness. Ask your pharmacist for help.
- **Menstrual spotting** (small amount of bleeding — less than a period)
  - This should go away in a day or two.

## Follow-up:

- Your next period may be a little earlier or later than usual. The flow may be heavier, lighter, or the same as usual.
- If you do not get your period within 3 weeks after taking EC, you may be pregnant. Contact your healthcare provider to get a pregnancy test.
- See your healthcare provider for an effective method of birth control and for STI/HIV testing and prevention.

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- If you do not have a regular healthcare provider, ask the pharmacist for a list of providers.
- If you were raped or forced to have sex, call the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center at 1-800-841-8371 (English) or Llamanos Y Hablamos at 1-800-223-5001 (Spanish) for help.

## Other information:

- If you do not want to become pregnant right now, you will need to use an effective form of birth control (like condoms, diaphragms, or oral contraceptive pills). EC does not work as well as other forms of birth control that are used before sex to prevent pregnancy.
- Taking EC before sex **will not** prevent pregnancy. EC does not prevent pregnancy from sex that happens after you take it.
- EC does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or HIV/AIDS. Use condoms every time you have sex to protect yourself against STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- EC works best when the first dose is taken within 72 hours (3 days).
  - If you take EC within 3 days after unprotected sex, it is 75-89% effective at preventing a pregnancy.
  - If you take EC between 3 and 5 days after unprotected sex, it is still more than 70% effective at preventing pregnancy.
  - The sooner you take EC, the better it works.
- EC will not cause an abortion. EC is not the same thing as RU-486 (the abortion pill).
- EC will not hurt your body or your pregnancy if you took it before you knew you were pregnant.
- EC will not affect your ability to get pregnant in the future.

A large graphic at the bottom of the page. It consists of a red greater-than sign (>) followed by the letters "EC" in a light blue, serif font. The "E" and "C" are significantly larger than the greater-than sign.