

INFORMATION Regarding LEVONORGESTREL 1.5mg Emergency Contraception

What is emergency contraception? Emergency contraception is a way to try to prevent pregnancy if you recently had sex. "Contraception" is another word for birth control.

You might use emergency contraception if:

- You forgot to take your birth control pills.
- The condom broke or slipped off during sex.
- You have a problem with your birth control (for example, your skin patch came off or your vaginal ring fell out).
- You had sex without using birth control.

Emergency contraception lowers the risk of pregnancy. It works by blocking the release of an egg from the ovary. It does not end a pregnancy that has already started.

Levonorgestrel 1.5mg is one type of emergency contraception. It is available without a prescription.

Sample brand names include Plan B One-Step and Next Choice One Dose. It is FDA approved for use for up to 72 hours following intercourse but may be used up to 5 days following intercourse. *The sooner you take it the more effective it will be.* The risk of pregnancy after taking levonorgestrel emergency contraception ranges from 1 to 7 percent.

(There is another emergency contraceptive pill called Ulipristal (Ella). This is available by prescription only and may be obtained at the Health Center. It is approved for up to 5 days following unprotected intercourse and reduces the risk of pregnancy to 1 to 2 percent. It may also be more effective than Levonorgestrel if you weigh more than 165 pounds.)

Side Effects

Levonorgestrel is safe and generally well tolerated. Side effects reported include nausea, lower abdominal pain, fatigue, dizziness, breast pain, and vomiting.

Emergency contraception pills can make some people vomit. If you vomit less than 1 hour after taking birth control pills for emergency contraception, you need to take them again. Before doing this, you can take a medicine called "[meclizine](#)" that helps keep you from vomiting. You can get meclizine from a drug store without a prescription (sample brand names: Antivert, Bonine, Dramamine).

What happens after I take emergency contraception?

You should get your period within a week of when you would normally expect it. If you do not have a normal period within 3 or 4 weeks, you should take a pregnancy test. (these are available at the Health Center) If you are bleeding more than a normal period or have pain in your belly, you should call the Health Center or see a provider.

If you have sex again after you take emergency contraception pills, you can still get pregnant. Use a condom or another type of birth control. If you normally use birth control pills, a patch, or a vaginal ring, but you missed some doses, you should resume those methods the day after taking emergency contraception, although you will need to use a backup form of birth control (such as a condom) for at least seven days.

If you have unprotected sex again, you can take emergency contraception again. We do not recommend relying on this as a regular form of birth control.

If you would like to be counseled regarding ongoing contraceptive options or any reproductive health related issue, please call the Health Center. At 607-436-3573.

We are open from 8:00 to 4:30 M-F and appointments are generally available within 24 hours.