

# Emergency Contraception

**EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION (EC) IS SAFE AND EFFECTIVE AT PREVENTING PREGNANCY AFTER UNPROTECTED SEX, BUT YOU MUST ACT SOON.**

## EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILLS

Emergency contraception (EC) is a safe and effective way to prevent pregnancy when your normal birth control fails or you have unprotected sex.

Women can take emergency contraceptive pills up to 5 days after unprotected sex, but the sooner the pills are taken, the better they will work.

## IS IT RIGHT FOR ME?

Let's face it: sometimes accidents happen. Did you have sex without using a condom? Did you forget to use your normal birth control? Did the condom break? If so, emergency contraception might be a good choice for you.

You might also consider EC if you've been raped, or you had sex with someone who refused to use another form of contraception.

Some people keep EC on hand in case

they have an emergency.



## WHERE CAN I GET IT?

Emergency contraception is available over-the-counter (without a prescription) for women 17 or older- no appointment necessary! Women under 17 can purchase EC after getting a prescription.

Plan B, one type of EC, is

available over-the-counter

for people 17 and older.



## FACTS ABOUT EC PILLS

- Are safe to use
- Women have been using them for over 30 years
- Offer protection and peace of mind after a “whoops” moment
- They prevent pregnancy through preventing ovulation- the release of an egg. Or they prevent fertilization- the joining of egg and sperm. This means that EC pills are not “abortion pills,” because they stop you from getting pregnant in the first place
- Plan B is a common brand of emergency contraception.
- Plan B works like birth control pills, but at a higher dose taken for a short period
- Some women who use EC experience an upset stomach, dizziness, headaches, and other side effects. If you do experience any of these they usually go away after 24 hours. If not, talk to your healthcare provider

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### HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

For men and women over 17 years old, EC over-the-counter costs about \$35.

For patients under the age of 17, purchasing emergency contraception will include the additional cost of the visit to your health care provider.

If you go to a Planned Parenthood clinic the co-pay can be as low as \$10.

If you go to a tribal health or IHS clinic the cost of the visit is often free or low cost and the cost of EC might be completely covered depending on where you live.

### KEEP SOME ON HAND

The sooner you take EC, the more effective it is. It's not a bad idea to keep some on hand, just in case you need it. Emergency contraception typically has a shelf life up to 3 years, so make sure to check the expiration date before you use it and throw out old EC, because if its beyond the expiration date it may not work as effectively.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For additional information about emergency contraception visit:

- [www.itsyoursexlife.com/gyt/know](http://www.itsyoursexlife.com/gyt/know)
- [www.plannedparenthood.org](http://www.plannedparenthood.org)
- [www.weRnative.org](http://www.weRnative.org)

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