

Did You Know?

Emergency Contraception

There are often a lot of questions about emergency contraception. The best place to turn for information is your doctor or pharmacist, but here are some general questions and answers:

What Is Emergency Contraception?

Emergency contraception is used to prevent a woman from getting pregnant after she has had unprotected sex. Unprotected sex can mean no birth control method was used, the chosen birth control did not work – like a broken condom or missing pills- or that a woman was forced to have sex when she did not want to. The most common form of emergency contraception is Plan B.

What Does It Do?

Plan B works like a regular birth control pill. It prevents pregnancy mainly by stopping the release of an egg from the ovary, and may also prevent the fertilization of an egg (the uniting of sperm with the egg). Plan B may also work by preventing it from attaching to the uterus (womb). It is important to remember that Plan B is not a substitute for routine birth control, and it does not protect you from HIV infection and any other sexually transmitted disease.

Where Can I Get It?

Plan B is now available without prescription for women 18 or older. If you live in Alaska, California, Hawaii, Maine, New Mexico, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts or Washington, you can get Plan B without a prescription at some pharmacies, but you should call ahead to make sure your pharmacy offers and stocks Plan B.

How Do I Use It?

You should *always* take Plan B as directed. That means taking it as specified by a doctor or pharmacist. Generally Plan B comes in two tablets. The first is taken as soon as possible within 3 days of unprotected sex and the second is taken 12 hours later. You should always consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking Plan B.

Is Emergency Contraception the Same as the Abortion Pill?

No. Emergency contraception can only keep a woman from *becoming* pregnant. It is important to know that Plan B will not affect a fertilized egg already attached to the uterus. It will not affect an existing pregnancy.

The information from this “Did You Know” was found at:

<http://www.go2planb.com/ForConsumers/AboutPlanB/AboutEmergencyContraception.aspx>

This was brought to you by the Resource/Referral program at EWC as part of a bi-weekly awareness project. R/R is located in the basement of Wilder Hall or you can reach us at 545-0883.