

Taking Emergency Contraception (EC)

What

- ✓ One or two pills that delays ovulation, so your body doesn't release an egg

Effectiveness

- ✓ If you take EC right after having unprotected sex, it can reduce your chance of pregnancy by 95%.
- ✓ The effectiveness goes down the longer you wait, but it is still worth it to take EC within 5 days of unprotected sex.

How many times can I use EC?

- ✓ You can use EC as often as you need. It will be just as effective no matter how many times you use it.
- ✓ But EC is **not** as effective as a **longer acting** method of birth control.
- ✓ If you find that you need to use EC a lot and you want something more consistently effective, your advocate, clinic or provider can help you find a birth control method that will work better for you.

How do you know it is working? And, Side Effects

- ✓ People usually have some bleeding (like a period with some nausea and cramps), but not everyone will. The bleeding is a side effect and is not a guarantee that someone is *not* pregnant. The only way to know if you are pregnant or not is to take a pregnancy test, which can usually be taken 7-14 days after unprotected sex.
- ✓ Bleeding could start as soon as 8 hours after taking it, or up to 2 days later, or it's possible someone may not bleed at all.
- ✓ EC is effective for people taking testosterone (T). If you are on T, you will **NOT** bleed, it is important to take a pregnancy test two weeks after unprotected sex to rule out pregnancy.
- ✓ If you throw up within two hours of taking the pill, you have to take it again.
- ✓ Bottom line, after taking EC, you should get a pregnancy test two weeks after unprotected sex to rule out pregnancy.

When can I start using hormonal birth control?

- ✓ Right away! You can start using hormonal birth control methods like the pill or the shot the same day that you start EC, including people on hormone therapy (like Testosterone).
- ✓ Be sure to use a back-up birth control, like condoms, until your hormonal birth control becomes effective for your body (7 days for most hormonal birth controls).

What happens if EC doesn't work and I become pregnant? Could it hurt the developing pregnancy?

- ✓ EC won't hurt you or your pregnancy.
- ✓ EC is not an abortion pill and it does not cause birth defects.
- ✓ Taking EC does not hurt your chances of getting pregnant in the future.

More questions? . . . answers and resources – You can purchase EC (one pill) inexpensively at amazon.com \$6 -\$10 per pill, the My Way brand, and bulk pregnancy test strips on Amazon.

Other kinds of EC

- ✓ Copper IUD (Paragard) – Must be administered by a medical provider within 5 days of unprotected sex
- ✓ Ella – must be prescribed by a medical provider within 5 days of unprotected sex

<https://www.bedsider.org/> <https://www.bedsider.org/features/368-i-m-trans-do-i-need-birth-control>
<https://wscadv.org/projects/reproductive-justice/>

Questions? . . .contact Leigh at leigh@wscadv.org, revised 9/28/2022