



# Emergency Contraception

*It is not too late to prevent pregnancy*



## Information for Patients about Plan B

### WHAT IS EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION?

Emergency contraception (EC) is taken **AFTER** sex to prevent pregnancy. Plan B is the most common method of EC. Plan B is **NOT** the same as the abortion pill and does not work if you are already pregnant.

### YOU CAN USE PLAN B IF:

- You did not use birth control.
- You think your birth control method didn't work such as:
  - ❖ the condom broke or slipped off,
  - ❖ you forgot two (2) or more birth control pills in a row,
  - ❖ you were late getting your birth control shot, or
  - ❖ your partner did not pull out in time.



### THE BEST TIME TO TAKE PLAN B

- As soon as possible **AFTER** sex.
- It can be taken up to 120 hours (5 days) after sex.

### HOW DOES PLAN B WORK?

- It is thought that Plan B works by:
  - ❖ preventing the egg from being released in the woman's body, or
  - ❖ stopping the sperm from meeting the egg, or
  - ❖ preventing the fertilized egg from implanting (attaching to the uterus).
- Plan B will not cause an abortion.

### HOW TO TAKE PLAN B

Plan B consists of 2 pills. You can either follow the instructions in the box, which say to take one pill right away and the other 12 hours later **OR** you can take the two pills at the same time. It is easiest to take the two pills together because it works just as well and you don't have to remember to take a second dose.

### WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER TAKING PLAN B

- Less than a quarter of women who take **Plan B** feel sick to the stomach. Very few of them may actually vomit:
  - If you vomit more than one (1) hour after taking the pills, do not worry. The medication is already in your system.
- Headaches, dizziness, tiredness and breast tenderness are less common and last only a day or two.
- Irregular bleeding or spotting can also occur; the next period may be either early or late.
- If your period is more than one (1) week late or it is lighter than usual, take a pregnancy test.

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## HOW WELL DOES PLAN B WORK?

Plan B reduces the chance of getting pregnant after sex but it is not 100% effective. The sooner it is taken after unprotected sex, the better it works to prevent a pregnancy from occurring.

- If Plan B is taken within 24 hours of unprotected sex, **Plan B** prevents about 95% of pregnancies.
- If Plan B is taken within 120 hours of unprotected sex, **Plan B** prevents about 60% of pregnancies.
- If Plan B does not work and you do become pregnant or if you were already pregnant when you took Plan B, it will **not** harm the baby.

## CAN I GET PREGNANT IN THE FUTURE IF I USE PLAN B TODAY?

- EC does not prevent pregnancy from happening in the future, even in this month. You need to use birth control EVERY TIME you have sex, even AFTER taking EC.
- Accidents do happen. It is safe to take EC again if you need it, even in this cycle.



## WHERE CAN I GET PLAN B?

There are many different ways to get Plan B—even without seeing a doctor.

- Family planning clinics, OBGYNs, family doctors –FREE if Family PACT 1-800-942-1054
- STD clinics – most are FREE
- Planned Parenthood – low cost or free: 1-800-576-5544 or [www.pplosangeles.org](http://www.pplosangeles.org).
- A local pharmacy: cost will range from \$30-50 without a prescription
  - If you are age 17 or over, you can now get Plan B without a prescription just by asking for it at the pharmacy and showing proof of your age.
  - If you are under age 17 or don't have proof of age, you can get Plan B from some pharmacies. Call 1-800-521-5211 or [www.ec-help.org](http://www.ec-help.org) to find out what pharmacies provide this service.

**For advice and help obtaining EC from a provider, clinic or pharmacy, call the California EC Hotline (800) 521-5211.**

## PLAN B IS FOR EMERGENCY USE ONLY

Plan B is not for use as a routine birth control method. If you are having sex regularly, you need to use a regular birth control method (the pill, condom, the shot, etc) for every time you have sex. You can also ask for a prescription or package of Plan B to keep at home just in case of emergency. To find the Planned Parenthood clinic nearest you, call 1-800-576-5544 or visit [www.pplosangeles.org](http://www.pplosangeles.org). You can find other state funded family planning services by calling Family PACT at 1-800-942-1054

## WHEN TO SEE A HEALTH PROVIDER

If you vomit within an hour of taking Plan B, or if you see the pills in your vomit, you may need another dose of medicine.

## PLAN B DOES NOT PREVENT STDs AND HIV/AIDS

Women having unprotected sex may be at risk of STDs and HIV/AIDS as well as pregnancy.