

Emergency Contraception

Emergency contraception is known as the “morning after pill.” This medication is made from synthetic progesterone hormones. Emergency contraception should be taken within 72 hours of unprotected sexual intercourse.

Plan B One Step is available for female students through Health Services. Plan B One Step is a single tablet, single dose emergency contraceptive. When taken as directed --- within 72 hours (3 days) after contraceptive failure or unprotected intercourse --- approximately seven out of eight women who would have gotten pregnant will not become pregnant after taking Plan B One Step.

How do I get Plan B One Step?

Plan B One Step is available behind the counter at pharmacies and sold under the supervision of pharmacy staff. A prescription is needed for women under age 17. Women age 18 or older, do not need a prescription. If the Health Services Office is closed or you do not want to wait, local pharmacies include:

- CVS Pharmacy, 45 Franklin Tpke., Mahwah, NJ 201-529-5930
- CVS Pharmacy, 259 N. Franklin Tpke., Ramsey, NJ 201-327-9430
- CVS Pharmacy, 5 Indian Rock, Suffern, NY 845-357-1500
- Oakland Drugs, 373 Ramapo Valley Road, Oakland, NJ 201-337-7300
- Walgreens Pharmacy, 409 Ramapo Valley Road, Oakland, NJ 201-337-2349

Plan B One Step is available for female students at Health Services. An appointment is required. Plan B One Step will only be dispensed for the person for whom the medication is intended. It will not be dispensed to any other person. Health Services is staffed by Nurse Practitioners. In the State of New Jersey, Nurse Practitioners can only dispense medication to the patient for whom it is intended. If you are the significant other or a friend of the patient, you can go to a local pharmacy to purchase the Plan B One Step as a Pharmacist can dispense to someone other than the patient.

You can schedule your appointment by calling 201-684-7536. The medical staff will need to know when the incident occurred so that the appointment can be scheduled within the time frame of 72 hours. In most cases the patient will be seen within 24 hours of the request for the appointment.

During the appointment, the female student will sign an informed consent in regards to Plan B One Step indicating that they understand how Plan B One Step works as well as the side effects of the medication. The medical provider will also ask the female student a series of questions in regards to the request for Plan B One Step. If indicated, Plan B One Step will be dispensed to the female student.

When should I take Plan B One Step?

Plan B One Step is indicated when:

- The condom broke or slipped off
- You did not use any method of birth control
- The diaphragm or cervical cap became dislodged
- You have been on oral birth control less than 3 months or you forgot to take your pill for 3 or more consecutive days.
- You were late getting your Depo Provera injection.

How does Plan B One Step work?

Plan B One Step works similar to regular birth control. It simply contains a higher dose of progesterone, a hormone, than birth control does. It works primarily by:

- Preventing ovulation
- *Possibly* preventing fertilization by altering tubal transport of the sperm and/or egg
- Producing changes in the lining of the uterus which may prevent the implantation of a fertilized egg.

Plan B One Step is not effective once the process of implantation has begun. It will not affect the pregnancy or harm a developing fetus.

What are the side effects of Plan B One Step?

In clinical trials, women tolerated Plan B One Step well: 14% experienced nausea and 1% experienced vomiting. Some mild side effects such as changes in your period, nausea, lower abdominal pain, fatigue, headache, dizziness and breast tenderness were also experienced.

After taking Plan B One Step, your next period may be lighter or heavier than usual and may come earlier or later. If your period is more than 7 days late, you may be pregnant and should see your medical provider. If you experience severe abdominal pain, you should go immediately

to the hospital as you may have an ectopic pregnancy and would need immediate medical attention.

Important Points:

Before you take Plan B One Step, be sure you understand both the benefits and the possible problems of using this medication. Plan B One Step is hormonal pill that you take to try to prevent pregnancy after you have unprotected intercourse either due to a birth control method failure or no birth control method was used.

Plan B One Step should be taken within 72 hours of unprotected intercourse.

Emergency contraception prevents a pregnancy about 76-99% of the time, depending on when, in your cycle, the unprotected intercourse takes place. However, this method may fail to prevent pregnancy in some cases, because:

- A fertilized egg already implanted in the uterus
- Too much time has passed since the unprotected intercourse
- Failure of the Plan B One Step