



Emergency Contraception (EC)

What you need to know.

Afraid of an unplanned pregnancy? We can help.

Emergency contraception (the morning after pill) like Plan B® or Ella® can help prevent pregnancy if you've had unprotected sex — for whatever reason. Whether you didn't remember to use birth control, you missed a birth control pill, the condom broke, your partner didn't pull out in time, or you were coerced into having unprotected sex.

Things you should know:

- **It may not always work.** Some emergency contraceptive pills may not work as well if you weigh more than 165 pounds. In that case, there are other options available. MFHS healthcare providers can help you find the right method for you, since these methods require a prescription.
- **MFHS offers 2 types of EC**
 - **Plan B® (levonorgestrel)** is available in most pharmacies without a prescription. It is effective up to three days after unprotected sex and is almost 90% effective for women who weight up to 165 lbs.
 - **Ella® (ulipristal acetate)** is another very effective type of morning-after pill and remains as effective in people weighing up to 195 lb. (88.4 kg). This pill requires a prescription.
- **EC is intended only to be a back-up plan**, and is not intended to be used regularly as birth control. While it is effective in preventing pregnancy, it is not as reliable as birth control that you take before sex. If you are having sex and not currently using a method of birth control, you need to get a safe and reliable method.
- **EC does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases**, so it's important to practice safe sex and use a condom every time, even if you are using a method to prevent pregnancy.
- EC will not prevent you from getting pregnant if you have unprotected sex after you take EC. Use condoms or another reliable method of birth control.
- **Emergency Contraception (EC) is NOT an abortion pill.** EC contains a hormones called levonorgestrel or ulipristal. They do not end a pregnancy that has already begun. They work by delaying or preventing ovulation (the release of an egg). They need to be taken as soon as possible; they work best in the first 3-5 days after unprotected sex. Emergency contraception (EC) isn't the same as mifepristone (Mifeprex), also known as the abortion pill. Mifepristone terminates an established pregnancy where the fertilized egg has attached to the uterine wall and has begun to develop.

After you get Plan B, let MFHS help you with your Plan A!

MFHS offers a wide range of confidential reproductive health services that are provided regardless of age, income or insurance coverage. Depending on your income, care is provided either free or for an affordable sliding fee. To schedule an appointment, contact a MFHS Health Center near you. MFHS offers free or low-cost birth control — whether it be condoms, birth control pills, IUDs (like Paragard and Mirena), implants (like Nexplanon) or other types of long-acting reversible contraceptives — that's best suited for your body and lifestyle.

Call or visit today for a center near you!
800-367-6347 | MFHS.org





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Plan B One Step vs. Ella

How to take Plan B One Step®

- Take one pill by mouth as soon as possible after unprotected sex.
- You can take the pill up to 5 days after unprotected sex, but works much better if you take it during the first 3 days.
- Emergency contraception will not prevent you from getting pregnant if you have unprotected sex after you take it.
- Don't take Plan B® or other levonorgestrel morning-after pills if you've taken Ella in the last 5 days.
- Don't take an emergency contraceptive like plan B or ella if you have abnormal vaginal bleeding that has not been checked out by a healthcare provider.
- Take a pregnancy test if you haven't gotten your period within 3 weeks after taking the morning-after pill.
- Don't take levonorgestrel (Plan B®) if you know or suspect that that you are already pregnant.

Side effects with Plan B®

- Most women do not have any serious side effects or complications.
- If you are taking other medications, check with your healthcare provider or pharmacist before taking the pill. Some medications like antibiotics, seizure medications, HIV meds and herbal supplements might make emergency contraceptives not work as well.
- Some common side effects are headache, you may feel a little dizzy or tired. You may get an upset stomach. If you throw up within 2 hours of taking the pill, you should call your healthcare professional. You may need to take it again.
- You may have some unexpected bleeding that should go away with your next period. Your next period may come earlier or later or be heavier or lighter than is normal for you. If you have bleeding or spotting that lasts more than a week or you have severe belly pain, contact a healthcare professional. If you don't get your period within 3 weeks, get a pregnancy test to make sure you're not pregnant.

Sources:
[Emergency Contraception | ACOG](#)
[Plan B One-Step® | Morning After Pill \(planbonestep.com\)](#)

How to take ella®

- Take one pill by mouth as soon as possible after unprotected sex. You can take the pill up to 5 days after unprotected sex, it is effective in preventing pregnancy for up to 5 days, or 120 hours. Don't take ella® (Ulipristal Acetate) if you know or suspect that that you are already pregnant.
- ella® is not recommended for people who are breastfeeding. ella® can contaminate breast milk, which means that a breastfeeding person must discard their milk for at least 36 hours after taking it.
- Contact your healthcare provider immediately in case of vomiting within 2 hours of taking the tablet, to discuss whether to take another tablet.
- Don't take ella® if you have abnormal vaginal bleeding that has not been checked out by a healthcare provider.
- Contact your healthcare provider if you experience severe lower abdominal pain 3 to 5 weeks after taking ella®, in order to be evaluated for an ectopic (tubal) pregnancy.
- Take a pregnancy test if you haven't gotten your period within 3 weeks after taking the morning-after pill.
- After using ella®, if you want to start taking a birth control pill, you should wait 5 days after taking ella®. Repeated use of ella® within the same menstrual cycle is not recommended.

Side effects with ella®

- Most women do not have any serious side effects or complications.
- If you are taking other medications, you should check with your healthcare provider or pharmacist before taking the pill. Some medications like antibiotics, seizure medications, HIV meds and herbal supplements might make emergency contraceptives not work as well.
- The most common side effects of ella® (ulipristal acetate) tablets include headache (18%), abdominal pain (12%), nausea (12%), dysmenorrhea (9%), fatigue (6%), and dizziness (5%).

Sources:
[Emergency Contraception | ACOG](#)
[ella® | Emergency Contraceptive | Info for Health Care Professionals \(ella-now.com\)](#)

