



Emergency Contraception

Emergency Contraception (EC)

EC are methods used by people with a uterus to prevent pregnancy after unprotected penis/vagina sex. These methods have varying degrees of effectiveness depending on what method is used and timing. EC does not cause an abortion and will not stop a pregnancy that's already established. EC comes in IUD and pill options. For details on the IUD option, please see a medical provider.

Emergency Contraception Pills (ECP)

ECP are pills taken within 5 days of unprotected penis/vagina sex. They're approximately 89% effective in reducing your risk of pregnancy if taken within 72 hours. They can be somewhat less effective if taken from 72-120 hours depending on the regime used. There are three different types of ECP.

- **Ella** (ulipristal acetate): Ella is available by prescription only and is covered by SHIP. You can request a prescription from the Advice Nurse without an appointment. Ella has been shown to be more effective overall than other ECP because of its higher efficacy when taken beyond 3 days after unprotected penis/vagina sex (3-5 days). It also appears to be more effective than other types of ECP for overweight people. You should not take Ella if you're breastfeeding. Because hormonal contraception (pills, patches, rings, etc.) can decrease the efficacy of Ella and vice versa, wait to start/restart hormonal birth control (BC) until 5 days after taking Ella. Use a backup method until 7 days after initiating your BC.
- **Plan B One Step**: This is 1 pill of progestin-only hormone. It should be taken orally as soon as possible up to 5 days after unprotected intercourse. Plan B may be less effective in people with a uterus with a BMI of 30+. It's available by request without a prescription at the UHS Pharmacy and most community pharmacies.
- **Ezcontra/Next Choice**: These are generic versions of progestin only EC. The package may contain a single tablet (1.5mg levonorgestrel) or 2 tablets (.75mg levonorgestrel each). If your package contains 2 pills, it's recommended you take them both at the same time rather than 12 hours apart as the package indicates. Studies suggest it's more effective the sooner the medication is taken. Not covered by SHIP, but available at the UHS Pharmacy for about \$20. *Continued on back...*



Side Effects of ECP

- **Nausea/Vomiting:** Try taking your ECP with food. While anti-nausea medication is not normally needed, you can pre-treat with over-the-counter Dramamine, Meclizine, or Benadryl per package directions. These medications can cause drowsiness. If vomiting occurs within 3 hours of taking ECP, you will need to repeat the dose.
- **Breast Tenderness:** This may be uncomfortable but will go away when you start your period. You can use Tylenol or Ibuprofen as directed if it's bothersome.

Your Next Period

You should have a period within 2-4 weeks of taking ECP. It may come earlier or later than usual. Consider taking a pregnancy test 2-3 weeks after using ECP. This is especially important if you haven't had a period by this time. ECP use can serve as a great reminder that you might want to consider a more effective method of BC. UHS offers a full array of options.

University Health Services Resources

- EC and pregnancy testing: Urgent Care (510) 642-3188.
- Pregnancy testing and birth control options: Appointments (510) 642-2000 x 2.
- Self-directed services: pregnancy testing or birth control (pills, patch, Nuvaring): eTang.
- Pharmacy pregnancy tests: UHS 1st floor (510) 642-3249.
- Pregnancy counseling, referrals, and information: Social Services (510) 642-6074.
- Birth control education: Sexual Health Education Program (510) 642-7202 and Healthy Sexuality Coaching (510) 642-3620.

Other Resources

- EC and pregnancy tests are available in the Wellness Vending Machine on the first floor of the Rec Sports Facility (2301 Bancroft Way).
- plannedparenthood.org
- womenshealth.gov
- mybirthcontrolapp.org