

BARD COLLEGE HEALTH SERVICES
(845)758-7433

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

What is Emergency Contraception?

Emergency Contraception (EC) is birth control used after unprotected sex to help prevent pregnancy. It works by delaying or temporarily stopping ovulation (the release of an egg that can be fertilized by sperm), or by changing the environment of the uterus or cervix so that sperm and egg do not meet.

EC is best used right away (or up to five days after sex, depending on the pill) if you think your birth control failed, you didn't use contraception, or vaginal intercourse was unplanned, unintended, or unwanted.

What are the different types of EC?

PILLS:

Plan B, Plan-B One- Step, Next Choice, and Levonorgestrel Tablets are available for sale *directly from pharmacists without a prescription*. Ulipristal Acetate Pills (ELLA) is available by prescription only. **FYI: Bard College health Services offers Plan B and Ella.**

Plan B:

- Can be used up to 3 days (72 hours) after unprotected intercourse
- Is effective for women with BMI < 26
- Will not harm fetus if pregnancy is already established
- Is not an abortion pill.
- Plan B is contraindicated after taking Ella in the same cycle.
- Abstain from vaginal sex or use a back up method until the of the cycle, Plan-B will not protect you for the rest of the cycle.
- ****also available from BRAVE on weekends****: call ext .7777 and ask to speak with BRAVE counselor.
- *No prescription required*

Ella:

- Can be used up to 5 days (120 hours) after unprotected intercourse
- Is effective for women with BMI < 30.
- More effective than Plan B if unprotected intercourse occurred during mid-cycle.
- May harm fetus if pregnancy is already established. Pregnancy test needs to be done before taking Ella.
- Is not an abortion pill.
- Plan B is contraindicated after taking Ella in the same cycle.
- Using Ella with hormonal birth control such as pills can cause both Ella and pills to be less effective in preventing pregnancy.
- Can be used only once per menstrual cycle.
- Abstain from vaginal sex or use a back up method until the of the cycle, Ella will not protect you for the rest of the cycle.
- *Prescription required*

COPPER-T IUD "PARAGARD"

*(FYI: Bard Health Services does not offer IUDs**)*

- IUD can be inserted up to 5 days after intercourse.
- In addition to EC, an IUD can be used as ongoing contraception for up to 10 years.
- Though highly effective, they are not appropriate for all women.
- Women who have chlamydia or gonorrhea infections are at increased risk of pelvic infections and infertility if an IUD is inserted before the infection is successfully treated.
- ****If you are interested in IUD option, you need to contact Planned Parenthood offices in Kingston or Poughkeepsie, Mondays 8A - 4P are for walk-ins.**

Kingston:

21 Grand St.,
Kingston, NY 12401
p: [845.562.7800](tel:845.562.7800)

Poughkeepsie:

17 Noxon Street
Poughkeepsie, NY
12601
p: [845.562.7800](tel:845.562.7800)

www.ppmhv.org

How effective is EC?

Pills

- EC can reduce the risk of pregnancy by 52 to 100 percent, depending on how soon you take it, the brand, and timing of unprotected sex related to your cycle.
- If your period is delayed more than 1 to 2 weeks after taking EC, a pregnancy test is recommended.
- *Research suggests Ella is more effective than progestin-only pills when taken around the time of ovulation, on day four or five following unprotected sex, and by heavier women.*

Copper-T IUD

- Emergency insertion of a copper IUD up to five days after unprotected sex can reduce the risk of pregnancy by up to 99 percent.
- Though emergency contraception is an option for up to five days after unprotected sex, it should be used as soon as possible to maximize effectiveness.

Side effects of pills:

- You will most likely feel fine. EC pills have no long-term or severe side effects.
- You may have nausea, vomiting, headache, dizziness, tiredness, breast pain, spotting, or cramps for 1-2 days after taking the pills.
- If you have severe lower abdominal pain 3 to 5 weeks after taking EC pill, contact Bard Health Services or go to nearest emergency room.
- To prevent nausea, you can take anti-nausea medicine (such as Meclizine) one hour before you take EC pills.
- Your next period may come a few days early or a few days late. If you vomit < 2 hours after taking the pill, you need to repeat

What is the best choice for you?

- If it has been three days or less since unprotected sex and you are of average body weight (BMI under 25), over-the-counter EC may be your best option. Progestin-only pills are available at the Bard College Health Services.
- If it has been four or five days since unprotected sex, prescription EC (Ella) may be your best option. Meet with an NP to discuss your options.
- If you have a BMI of 26 to 30, prescription EC ELLA may be your best option. Meet with an NP to ask about a prescription.
- If you are thinking about having an emergency IUD placed, please contact Planned Parenthood (see above).
- If you have concerns about being exposed to a sexually transmitted infection, had sex against your will, or are not sure if you need emergency contraception, please make appointment with an NP at Health Services nurse by calling (845)758-7433.
- You need to inform Health Services if you are taking medications or supplements on a regular basis. Some seizure, headache, stomach, immunotherapy, HIV medications and antibiotics may make EC pill less effective.
- Many health insurance plans allow you to obtain emergency contraception at no cost to you, when you have a prescription. Call Bard Health Services if you need a prescription now, or would like to have one on hand.

Can I use emergency contraception as my regular form of birth control?

Emergency contraception is not meant to be a regular method of birth control. You should not use emergency contraception as your only protection against pregnancy, because this method doesn't work as well as other types of birth control. and you will be taking chances. If you find yourself consistently using EC, you need to speak to NP at Health Services about using a regular type of birth control method.

When can I expect my next menstrual period after I have taken emergency contraception?

Your period should start within 2-4 weeks after taking EC. Your next period may start a little early or a few days later than usual. You may also have spotting, however; this is neither common nor serious. If your next period is late, contact your health care provider and get a pregnancy test.

What if I have problems after I have taken emergency contraception (EC)? You should definitely call your health care provider if:

- You do not get your period within 2 weeks after your scheduled time
- You have severe abdominal pain
- Your next menstrual period is very light
- You are dizzy

If you plan to travel:

State and international laws vary regarding the availability of EC (both over-the-counter and by prescription). If you will be leaving campus for a considerable period of time (e.g., summer or winter break, going abroad for a semester), plan ahead. You may want to consider purchasing EC pills to have on hand in case of future contraceptive failure or other emergencies. Talk to your health care provider about this option.

For more information :

www.planbonestep.com/index2.aspx

www.ella-rx.com/

www.not-2-late.com

