

What is Emergency Contraception?

Emergency Contraception (EC) can be used AFTER unprotected sex (such as vaginal intercourse or when ejaculate comes in contact with the vagina) and birth control was not used, may have failed, or in instances of sexual assault.

BIRTH CONTROL FACT SHEET

Type	Copper IUD	Progestin (Levonogestrol) Pill	Ulipristal Acetate Pill (Brand name: Ella)
Effectiveness	Most effective 99% effective at preventing pregnancy if inserted up to 7 days after unprotected sex.	Moderately effective Reduces the chance of pregnancy by approximately 50%. Most effective when taken as soon as possible, but can be taken up to 5 days (120 hours) after unprotected sex.	Moderately effective Reduces the chance of pregnancy by approximately 60%. Most effective when taken as soon as possible, but can be taken up to 5 days (120 hours) after unprotected sex.
\$	Range from \$50 - \$150	Range from free - \$40	Range from \$40 - \$60
What is it?	An IUD is a small T-shaped device that is inserted through the vagina into the uterus by a healthcare provider. Can be inserted up to 7 days after unprotected sex.	A pill that can be taken up to 5 days (120 hours) after unprotected sex. e.g. Plan B, morning after pill, norolevo, contingency one	A pill that can be taken up to 5 days (120 hours) after unprotected sex.
How does it work?	When a copper IUD is inserted before ovulation, it prevents fertilization (the copper inactivates sperm). If it is inserted after ovulation, the copper IUD prevents implantation.	Progestin EC delays the release of an egg (ovum) before ovulation. If someone is too close to ovulation or has already ovulated it will not work. If a person is already pregnant, taking EC pills will not affect the pregnancy.	Ulipristal EC delays the release of an egg (ovum) when taken before ovulation. If someone has already ovulated it will not work. If a person is already pregnant, taking EC pills will not affect the pregnancy.
How do I use it?	A healthcare provider inserts the IUD into the uterus (see "How can I access it?").	Progestin EC (packaged as one or two pills) should be taken as one dose as soon as possible after unprotected sex. If vomiting occurs within two hours of taking progestin EC, consider repeating the dose. Since it can be hard to tell when a person has ovulated, it can be taken any time in a person's cycle. A person's period should start within three weeks of taking EC. Take a pregnancy test three weeks after taking them if you haven't had a period yet.	Ulipristal EC should be taken as one dose as soon as possible after unprotected sex. If vomiting occurs within two hours of taking ulipristal EC, consider repeating the dose. Since it can be hard to tell when a person has ovulated, it can be taken any time in a person's cycle. A person's period should start within three weeks of taking EC. Take a pregnancy test 3 weeks after taking them if you haven't had a period yet.

	Copper IUD	Progestin Pill	Ulipristal Acetate Pill
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A copper IUD is the most effective form of EC and works even if you have ovulated. It is also a highly effective form of ongoing birth control. It can be taken out after the first period or kept in to provide effective pregnancy protection for up to 5 or 10 years. <p>For more information on IUDs see the IUD fact sheet on our website: optionsforsexualhealth.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widely available and no prescription needed Can be purchased in advance to have on hand in case of need. Birth control can be started immediately after taking progestin EC, with back-up contraception for the first seven days. Lowest cost of all EC options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slightly more effective than the progestin EC pill. Ulipristal EC keeps higher effectiveness up to 120 hours over the progestin EC, especially after 72 hours as compared to progestin EC.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a visit to a health care provider for insertion. Depending on where you live getting an appointment within 7 days may be a challenge. (www.emergencyiud.com) Side effects may include menstrual cramping or increased menstrual flow. Other side effects are rare, and will be reviewed by the health care provider Does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It only offers protection when taken after one act of unprotected sex. Does not provide ongoing protection from pregnancy. Because it works by delaying ovulation, there is an increased chance of getting pregnant if a person has unprotected sex again after taking progestin EC. Does not work if ovulation has already occurred or is about to occur. Does not protect against STIs. May be less effective in people who weigh more than 75 kg (165 pounds). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It only offers protection when taken after one act of unprotected sex and does not provide ongoing protection from pregnancy. Because it works by delaying ovulation, there is an increased chance of getting pregnant if a person has unprotected sex again after taking Ulipristal EC. Does not work if ovulation already occurred. Requires a prescription from a health care provider and not all pharmacies have it in stock. Affects the use of birth control: hormonal birth control cannot be started until 5 days after using ulipristal EC, and back-up birth control should be used for the first 14 days. Does not protect against STIs. May be less effective in people who weigh more than 75 kg (165 pounds).
How can I access it?	<p>An EC IUD can be inserted by a qualified healthcare provider. Some Options for Sexual Health clinics may provide this service. For a list of providers, you can visit www.emergencyiud.com or contact Sex Sense at 1-800-739-7367 or sexsense@optbc.org</p>	<p>You can get Progestin EC pills at Options for Sexual Health clinics, pharmacies, youth clinics and Emergency Departments. It does not require a prescription and can be purchased by anyone.</p>	<p>Ulipristal EC requires a prescription from a health care that is then taken to the pharmacy.</p>

If you are unable to access any of these EC methods call Sex Sense at 604-731-7803, 1-800-739-7367 or sexsense@optbc.org to learn about how birth control pills can be taken as EC (although this is not as effective as other EC methods).

Questions? We're here for you!

We know it can be confusing to choose and use a method. We are here to help.

You can visit one of our Options for Sexual Health Clinics to speak with a health care provider. Our Sex Sense Team is available Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. by phone 1-800-739-7367 or by email at SexSense.org to answer your questions about birth control, or any other questions about sex, sexuality, or sexual health. This fact sheet contains general information and should not be used in place of individual consultation with a qualified healthcare provider.