

What Clients Need to Know about Emergency Contraceptive Pills (ECPs)

What are ECPs?

- Pills taken after unprotected sex* to prevent pregnancy.
- Safe and effective.
- Prevent or delay release of egg.
- Do not cause an abortion.



What to expect

- May cause upset stomach or vomiting.
- May cause you to get your period early or have a longer period. May cause light bleeding after ingestion.
- Do not cause long-term side effects or health problems.

Key points

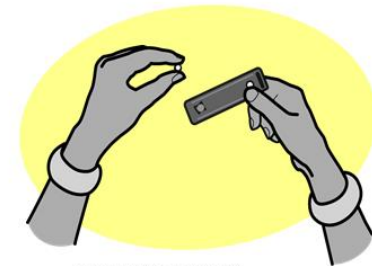
- ECPs do not prevent pregnancy the next time you have sex.
- See a health care provider if you do not get your next period within 1 week of when it's expected.
- Regular family planning methods are more effective. Talk with your provider about methods that will suit your needs.
- ECPs do not protect against STIs, including HIV. Use condoms to prevent STIs. Seek treatment if you think you may have been exposed to STIs.

Where to get ECPs

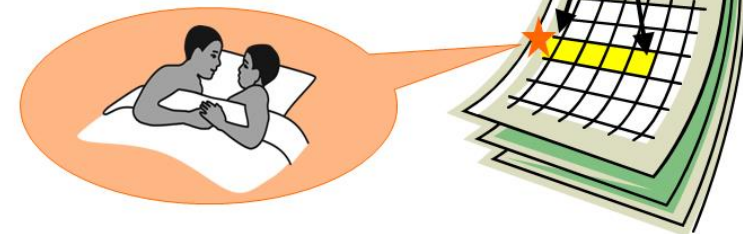
- Public hospital or health centre; private hospital or clinic.
- Pharmacy
- VHT member (trained in FP, including ECPs).

How to use ECPs

- Best to take as soon after unprotected sex as possible.
- Can be taken up to 5 days after unprotected sex.
- If you vomit within 3 hours of swallowing ECPs, take another dose.



5 days to use EC after unprotected sex



* *“Unprotected or under-protected sex” means forgetting to use regular FP method, a condom breaking, or not using a method. It includes rape, forced sex, and defilement.*

How to Provide ECPs for Your Clients (refer to information on the first page)

Step 1: Tell client about ECPs

- What they are
- What to expect
- Key points
- Where to get them

Step 2: Ask if client wants ECPs to:

- Use now (she had unprotected sex in the last 5 days and wants to prevent pregnancy).
- Keep in case she has unprotected sex.

Step 3: Explain how to use ECPs

- Works best when taken as soon after unprotected sex as possible.
- Can be taken up to 5 days after unprotected sex.
- Take another dose if you vomit within 2 to 3 hours of swallowing ECPs.

Step 4: If client needs to use ECPs immediately:

- Instruct her to open the package and explain how to take the pills (e.g., remove the pill(s) from the foil pouch and swallow them; if there are two pills, take both at once; if you vomit within 3 hours of taking ECPs, take another package).
- If you do not have ECPs, refer client to a health center or provider who does.
- Advise client to see a provider if period is more than 1 week later than expected.

Step 5: Ask client if she uses a regular FP method

- If yes, and she is satisfied with the method, review instructions for correct use.
- If no, ask if she would like to learn more about continuous FP methods.



One-pill option



Two-pill option

September 2017