

Family Planning

Welfare Association of NT Inc.

ABN 38 812 238 738

Family Planning Welfare Association of the NT Inc exists to provide quality health care and education services in reproductive and sexual health

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILL (ECP)

What is it?

The Emergency Contraception Pill (ECP) is often known as the “Morning After Pill”, but actually you can take it up to 5 days (120hrs) after sex. It is a hormonal pill used to reduce the risk of pregnancy after unprotected sexual intercourse

It consists of a hormone progestogen (Levonorgestrel). 1.5 mg single dose Levonorgestrel emergency contraception pill is available at FPNT and chemists.

THESE PILLS ARE AVAILABLE OVER THE COUNTER AT THE CHEMIST

When to use the Emergency Contraception?

ECP can help prevent pregnancy if you were having sex and:

- You didn't use any contraception / birth control
- The condom broke or slipped off
- Your partner didn't pull out in time
- You missed two or more of your regular birth control pills
- You are more than 14 days late for your depo injection
- You were forced to have sex

How Does ECP Work?

ECP works by preventing or delaying ovulation. It does **not** prevent fertilisation or disrupt an implanted embryo and **therefore DOES NOT cause an abortion.**

The ECP is very safe and can be taken more than once per cycle

You can ovulate after taking the ECP therefore you should keep on using another form of contraception e.g. condoms/pill for the rest of the cycle until your next period.

Effectiveness

The ECP is up to 85% effective at preventing pregnancy, but it is most effective when taken within 24 hours of having unprotected sex. The sooner the better!

Side Effects

These are minimal but the commonest side-effects can be:

- Spot bleeding
- Changes in timing of your next period it may come earlier or later
- Changes in the flow of your next period it may be lighter or heavier than usual
- Headache or dizziness
- Nausea or Vomiting

*** Minimise side effects by taking the ECP with food. If you vomit within 2 hours of taking the ECP you will need to repeat the dose

When will my next period occur?

Almost 60% of women will get their period within 3 days of their expected date. 15% may be up to 7 days late, whilst some 13% will be more than 7 days late.

*** If your period is more than 10 days late, do a pregnancy test

Follow up

You should return to the Family Planning Clinic or your Doctor if:

- Your period is more than 7 days late
- Your period is lighter than usual, more painful or you have spot bleeding
- You have lower abdominal pain
- You think you might be pregnant
- You need to organize ongoing contraception

Breastfeeding & the ECP

- It is safe to use
- It is unlikely to decrease your milk supply
- There is no evidence ECP causes any harm to your baby

Anticoagulants and ECP

The ECP may affect WARFARIN levels. Speak to your Doctor for further advice.

Some Disadvantages:

What You Should Know

- ECP is less effective than regular birth control methods *e.g. The Pill, Condoms etc...*
- If ECP doesn't work and you become pregnant, there may be an increased risk that the pregnancy will be ectopic (pregnancy outside the womb)
- ECP does not protect you from STI's.

REMEMBER:

The sooner it is taken after unprotected sex, the better the outcome.

Emergency Contraception #2 OPTION

Insertion of a copper intrauterine device IUD within 5 days of unprotected sex is another option and will provide very effective long term contraception. Speak to your Doctor asap.

For further information please call:

Family Planning NT (08) 8948 0144

NT HEALTH DIRECT 1800 022 222

Or

www.fpwnt.com.au