

Q: What is Plan B?

A: It's a form of emergency contraception.

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A: It is a form of contraception used after unprotected sex or after failed birth control method (e.g. broken condom) to prevent pregnancy.

Q: How does Plan B work?

A: It uses a high-dose hormone, progestin, to prevent the steps in a woman's body after sex that lead to pregnancy.

Q: How is this different from abortion?

A: Plan B stops the pregnancy from even occurring, while abortion terminates an existing pregnancy.

Q: How long after unprotected sex can I take Plan B?

A: Take the pills as soon as possible. They are effective up to 72 hours (3 days) after sex, and some studies say they are effective even up to 120 hours (5 days). However the risk of pregnancy increases the longer you wait.

Q: How do I take the pills?

A: Take one white pill within 72 hours of unprotected sex with food. Take the other white pill exactly 12 hours later. Do not take any extra pills, as they will not decrease the risk of pregnancy any further and will increase the chances of having side effects.

Q: How effective is Plan B in preventing pregnancy?

A: On average, if 100 women have unprotected sex once during the most fertile time of their cycle (2nd or 3rd week after the start of their period) of their cycle, 8 will become pregnant. If Plan B is used within the first 24 hours, only 1 woman out of 100 will become pregnant, reducing the risk of pregnancy by more than 90%!

Q: What are the side effects?

A: 23% of women have nausea and 6% report vomiting. If you vomit within one hour of taking a dose, call your doctor, as you may need to repeat this dose. Other less common side effects include cramps, headache, fatigue, dizziness, breast tenderness, and spotting for 2-3 days.

Q: When will my next period come after taking Plan B?

A: Your next period may start a few days earlier or later than usual and it might be longer or shorter than usual. If you don't have your period within 3 weeks or your period is very light, you might be pregnant. Make an appointment with your doctor for an exam and pregnancy test.

Q: Who should not take Plan B?

A: You should not take Plan B if you are already pregnant because it is ineffective as a form of contraception. If you are allergic to Levonorgestrel or other oral contraceptive pills, are taking anti-seizure medication or Rifampin, or have other major medical problems, consult your doctor. Otherwise, it is safe in every woman.

Q: What if I took Plan B without realizing I was already pregnant?

A: Plan B is safe in pregnancy and will not harm the mother or fetus. Like other forms of oral contraceptive pills, the hormones do not increase the risk of birth defects or miscarriage.

Q: Should I get Plan B before I have unprotected sex?

A: Yes! Because Plan B works best the sooner it is taken, it is a good idea to obtain Plan B before it is needed. However, the hormones are ineffective in preventing pregnancy if taken before sex.

Q: How do I get Plan B?

A: You can obtain a prescription from your doctor. Massachusetts may soon pass a law allowing the direct purchase of Plan B from your local pharmacist without a doctor's prescription. The pharmacist would reserve the right to withhold the medicine for any reason. If this was the case, you could find another pharmacist or see your doctor. These laws vary from state to state.

Q: Can I get Plan B if I am under 18 years of age without my parents knowing?

A: Yes. Plan B is considered a form of contraception. Women under the age of 18 under the law may obtain contraceptives without their parents' knowledge.

Q: How much does Plan B cost?

A: Between \$20 - \$30 for the two pill dose from the pharmacist.

Q: Is there a limit to how many times I can use Plan B?

A: There are no safety concerns with repeated use. However, *any* other method of ongoing contraception is more effective in preventing pregnancy and will be less expensive than Plan B. If you find yourself using Plan B repeatedly, you need to find another form of preventative contraception that you will use correctly and consistently.



Emergency Contraception

Frequently Asked Questions

For more information:

www.go2planB.com

www.not-2-late.com