

Emergency Contraception Demonstration

Recommended Age: 12+

Goal

- To explain what Emergency Contraception is, how it works, and where to get it.

Instructions

- Ask the youth, **“What type of birth control can be used if a condom breaks, there was no protection, or there was a sexual assault?”** Emergency Contraception, or ECP for short (Plan B or other brands), is the only birth control you can take after unprotected sex. If you did not use protection for whatever reason, you can try to prevent a pregnancy with ECP.
- ECP stops ovulation or slows the egg’s travel down the fallopian tube, making the lining of the uterus slippery and creating a thick mucus plug. ECP may be used up to 5 days after unprotected penis-vagina sex; however, the sooner it is taken, the more effective it is. **“It is most effective when used within 24 hours. Plan B is recommended for up to 72 hours, but can sometimes still be effective up to the fifth day.”** If someone is already pregnant, ECP will not harm the pregnancy. Note: Plan B is 95% effective when started within 24 hours of unprotected sex. The effectiveness decreases with each subsequent 24 hours, going down to 61% effectiveness if taken within 48-72 hours.ⁱ
- Some of the potential side effects are nausea and spotting. Explain that some people feel nauseous after taking ECP because of the high hormone dosages, while others are not affected. If the pills are thrown up or diarrhea occurs within two hours of taking ECP, the pills will need to be taken again. ECP will not cause abortion and does not prevent sexually transmitted infections.
- **“Where can you get ECP?”** If youth want to access ECP, encourage them to call the health centre or hospital ahead of going. Where there are teen clinics, teens can access ECP even on non-teen clinic days. FYI: In Winnipeg, Plan B is also available at

the pharmacy without a prescription, but costs anywhere from \$25 (Superstore) to \$42 (Shoppers Drug Mart). FYI: Plan B is less effective in people weighing 165 lbs (75 kg) or more and may not be effective in people weighing more than 176 lbs (80 kg). If your weight is 165 lbs (75 kg) or more, talk with a health care provider about your options.ⁱⁱ

- **Within 3-4 weeks of taking ECP, a period should occur. A pregnancy test should be done if this doesn't happen.** The sooner someone finds out they are pregnant, the better, as they can have access to all three pregnancy options.

Additional Activities

Ideally, this activity can be done together with:

- Hormonal Birth Control Demonstrations
- Condom Demo (see STI chapter)
- Internal Condom Demo (see STI chapter)

ⁱPlan B. (n.d.-a). *Frequently asked questions*. Plan B. Retrieved June 23, 2021, from <https://planb.ca/en/faq>

ⁱⁱPlan B. (n.d.-b). *What to expect from Plan B*. Plan B. Retrieved August 23, 2021, from <https://planb.ca/en/what-to-expect>