



NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Family Planning Program

**INFORMATION FOR
EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILLS (ECPs)**

BENEFITS: You are voluntarily choosing to use Emergency Contraception Pills (ECPs) to prevent an unintended pregnancy following unprotected intercourse. This method should be started as soon as possible and within 120 hours (5 days) after intercourse. ECPs are 74 percent to 89 percent effective when used correctly.

RISKS/SIDE EFFECTS (You may have the following side effects):

- * Nausea, stomach pain
- * Headaches, dizziness
- * Breast tenderness
- * Menstrual cycle changes

ALTERNATIVES:

You have been instructed to consider other methods of contraception for use. Some contraceptive methods can be started immediately after taking certain types of ECP. You have received written information on other methods of birth control.

INSTRUCTIONS:

You have been given a fact sheet on ECPs, along with instructions about how to take them. No guarantee has been made as to the results of using this method. The provider is in no way responsible should you become pregnant.

The ECP does not protect you against STDs (sexually transmitted disease) and HIV.

Complications of ECPs are rare. If you do experience complications, you will need to seek emergency health care.

DECISION:

The ECP's are to be taken after unprotected intercourse to prevent pregnancy. They are to be used as an emergency measure only and not as a routine method of birth control.

QUESTIONS:

You may ask questions about ECPs at any time and may contact the clinic with further questions.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR EMERGENCY CONTRACPTIVE PILLS

1. Emergency contraception works best the sooner you use it. Swallow the ECPs as soon as possible, within 120 hours (five days) after unprotected sexual intercourse.
2. For some types of ECPs, nausea and vomiting are possible but not likely. If you vomit two or more hours after taking your ECPs, do not worry. The medication is already in your system. A repeat dose may be recommended if vomiting occurs within three hours of taking ECP.
3. An over-the-counter medication may counteract nausea caused by ECPs. Take two 25 mg tablets of meclizine hydrochloride (over the counter Dramamine II or Bonine).
4. Some women may feel tired or dizzy or may have headaches or tender breasts. These side effects should go away within a day or two. Non-prescriptive pain relievers (such as ibuprofen or Tylenol) can be used for headache or breast tenderness. You also may note some menstrual spotting (small amounts of bleeding, less than a period) after taking ECPs. This should go away in a day or two.
5. Emergency contraception is not effective if you are already pregnant.
6. ECPs are not 100 percent effective. If your period has not started in 3 weeks, you should consider returning to the clinic for a pregnancy test.
7. ECPs will not protect you from pregnancy during the remainder of your menstrual cycle. You will need to use an effective form of birth control if you have sexual intercourse again.
8. You should contact your clinic if you have severe abdominal pain, since this could be a sign of a tubal pregnancy.
9. An advanced prescription or a pack of ECPs may be provided for you to have available at home for further acts of unprotected intercourse.