

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

Emergency contraception is a method of preventing pregnancy after unprotected intercourse has occurred. There are two types of emergency contraception (EC). One is the emergency contraceptive pill. The other is the insertion of the copper intrauterine device (IUD).

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILL (ECP)

ECP must be taken within 5 days (120 hours) of unprotected intercourse and can potentially reduce the risk of pregnancy. For maximum effectiveness, ECP should be taken as soon as possible after unprotected intercourse. ECP is for emergency use only. Some forms of ECP are available over the counter and one form is available by prescription only. Experiencing nausea is common after taking ECP. We encourage you to take ECP with food and water.

- Do not take ECP if you are currently pregnant.
- Take ECP as soon as possible and within 5 days (120 hours) after unprotected intercourse. Effectiveness varies depending on where you are in your menstrual cycle, when you had unprotected intercourse and when you take ECP. It is not as effective as the use of the copper IUD.
- Do not have unprotected intercourse after taking ECP. ECP will not work to prevent pregnancy during this time.
- We encourage you to consider starting an ongoing birth control method after using ECP because ECP is not as effective as other forms of birth control. You're welcome to return to Tapestry at any point to discuss the best method for you.
- It is not unusual to have spotting after taking ECP and your next period may occur a few days earlier or a few days later than expected. If you do not get a period within 4 weeks after taking ECP, please return to Tapestry for a pregnancy test.
- Some studies have shown that Plan B may be less effective or not effective in people who weigh 165 pounds or more and may not prevent pregnancy. The use of Plan B is believed to be better than using nothing at all. There are other EC options that are more effective, especially if you are over 165 pounds. Please talk to your counselor or clinician if you are interested in knowing more about these options.

THE PARAGARD (COPPER IUD)

The Paragard is the most effective form of emergency contraception and can reduce the risk of pregnancy by more than 99%. Insertion of the copper IUD must occur within 5 days of unprotected intercourse to be effective.

- In order to use the copper IUD as a form of emergency contraception, it must be inserted into the uterus within 5 days of unprotected sex.
- The insertion of the copper IUD needs to take place by a health care practitioner and requires a clinic visit.
- The copper IUD cannot be inserted if you are currently pregnant.
- Once the copper IUD is inserted, it can be removed or remain in the uterus for up to 12 years as one of the most effective forms of birth control.
- It is not unusual to have spotting or irregular bleeding after insertion of the copper IUD.

Please call any of the clinics with questions at the numbers located on the back side of this sheet.

Thank you for caring for yourself and for others!



Greenfield 278 Main Street, Suite 307A (413) 773-5403

Holyoke, 306 Race Street (413) 536-8777

North Adams 289 Church Street, MCLA Wellness Center (413) 662-5258

Northampton 76 Carlon Dr. (413) 586-2539

Pittsfield 100 Wendell Avenue, Suite 1 (413) 443-2844

Springfield 1985 Main Street, (413) 733-6639