

Emergency Contraception Facts

- Women of all ages can use emergency contraception to prevent unplanned pregnancy if they have had sex without using contraception or their contraception has failed.
- Many women who have had a crisis pregnancy did not think to use emergency contraception.
- Emergency contraception is not as effective as regular contraception and it does not prevent pregnancy in every woman.
- There is no evidence to suggest that use of emergency contraception can cause infertility.
- If you are already pregnant, emergency contraceptive pills or the coil will not work.
- Emergency contraception does not provide any protection from sexually transmitted infections.

If you've taken a chance or your contraception has failed, you could be at risk of getting pregnant. Emergency contraception is more effective the sooner you take it after having unprotected sex.

Long-Term Contraception

Most people use condoms or the pill to avoid unplanned pregnancy. Increasing numbers of women are now choosing more reliable long-term methods of contraception.

These include;

- **The implant**
- **The patch**
- **The injection**
- **The IUS**

These methods are 99% effective. Remember a condom is the only method of contraception that can protect you from sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

For more information on the best long-term contraceptive choice for you, talk to a pharmacist, GP or Family Planning Clinic, or visit thinkcontraception.ie.



For more information visit thinkcontraception.ie

Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet has been supplied by the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme in May 2012. It has made every effort to ensure that the information is accurate before going to print. Please remember that the information in this leaflet does not replace medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. If you have questions or concerns or need further information, visit a pharmacist, GP or Family Planning Clinic for professional advice.

About the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme

The HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme is a section of the Health Service Executive that has been set up to develop and implement a strategy to address the issue of crisis pregnancy in Ireland. For more information, visit crisispregnancy.ie.

Age of consent

The age of sexual consent in Ireland is 17 years for boys and girls.



Your Guide To Emergency Contraception





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If you've taken a chance or your contraception has failed, you could be at risk of getting pregnant.

What is emergency contraception?

Emergency contraception is a secondary method or 'back-up' contraceptive. It can be used if you want to avoid an unplanned pregnancy after you have had sex without using contraception or if contraception has failed (e.g. the condom slipped or you missed a pill). Emergency contraception is more effective the sooner you take it after having unprotected sex.

Emergency contraception does not provide any protection from sexually transmitted infections (STIs). To get advice on STI testing visit thinkcontraception.ie.

Emergency contraception is more effective the sooner you take it after having unprotected sex.

Your Emergency Contraception Choices

There are different emergency contraception choices for different situations, depending on when you had your last period and how long it has been since you had unprotected sex. Emergency contraception is more effective the sooner you take it after having unprotected sex. Ask a pharmacist for a private consultation or talk to a GP or Family Planning Clinic about the best option for you. The following table will give you an outline of the choices available.

For more information on emergency contraception visit thinkcontraception.ie.

	3 Day Pill (Levonelle or Norlevo)	5 Day Pill (EllaOne)	The Copper Coil (Post Coital IUD)
Time limit for use after unprotected sex:	72 hours (3 days)	120 hours (5 days)	120 hours (5 days)
Effectiveness:	Is highly effective in preventing pregnancy but should be taken as soon as possible preferably within 12 hours after unprotected intercourse.	Is highly effective but should be taken as soon as possible.	Is highly effective but get advice as soon as possible.
Available:	Norlevo is available directly from pharmacists. Levonelle and Norlevo are available on prescription from GPs (including out of hours co-ops) or Family Planning Clinics.	On prescription from GPs (including out of hours co-ops) or Family Planning Clinics.	Can be inserted by specially trained GPs or Family Planning Clinics.
Works by:	Delaying ovulation	Delaying ovulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preventing sperm from joining an egg Preventing the fertilised egg from attaching to the uterus
Future protection:	Does not protect you from pregnancy the next time you have sex. Get advice on resuming your regular method of contraception from a pharmacist, GP or Family Planning Clinic.	Does not protect you from pregnancy the next time you have sex. Get advice on resuming your regular method of contraception from a pharmacist, GP or Family Planning Clinic.	Can be left in the uterus for up to 8 years as a regular method of contraception. Can be removed if required at your next period.
Cost:	The cost of contraception varies depending on what form is most suitable to you, what providers are available to you and whether or not you have a medical card. Talk to a pharmacist, GP or Family Planning Clinic for more information on costs.		