All About Plan B
-Raquel Selcer, PHE

Q: What is Plan B?
A: Plan B, commonly referred to as “the morning after pill” can be taken after unprotected vaginal-penile intercourse to prevent pregnancy. There are two main pills that fall under this category

- Levonorgestrel pills, including the brands Next Choice One Dose and Plan B One-Step.
- Ulipristal acetate, known by the brand name “Ella”

While both pills can be referred to as the morning after pill they can actually both be taken up to 5 days or 120 hours after unprotected intercourse.

How does it work?
A: Plan B works by preventing the egg and sperm from joining. It can take up to 6 days after sex for them to join, which is why it’s possible to use emergency contraception. The primary way it works is by stopping the egg from being released for longer than usual. This is why the sooner after unprotected sex you take emergency contraception, the more likely it is to be effective. Emergency contraception is a birth control method, not an abortion pill, and will not interrupt an already existing pregnancy.

How effective is it?
A: While both pills are around 85% effective they have slight differences:
Levonorgestrel is 89% effective if taken within 2 days after intercourse and then drops slightly every day for the remaining 3 days after intercourse. Ulipristal acetate is 85% effective for all 5 days after unprotected sex.

Why can’t this be my primary method of birth control?
A: It’s not recommended to use emergency birth control as your primary form of birth control because it is less effective than other methods, more expensive, and depending on where you live, less accessible. In addition to this, using emergency birth control has the potential to make your periods irregular. If you don’t have a consistent form of birth control and have sex that can lead to pregnancy (vaginal-penile intercourse) you can explore your options by going to the student health center or visiting Planned Parenthood’s website. Bedsider is a good option, too!

Where Can I Get Plan B?
A: On Campus: Student Health Center
    Vending Machines in Walker at Pomona
In the Area: Planned Parenthood Upland: (various other locations exist)

Sources: The Morning After Pill

Health and Wellness Program
Sallie Tiernan Field House
909-607-8805
aarmijo@scrippscollege.edu