

Emergency Hormonal Contraception

Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) is also referred to as The Morning After Pill and is more commonly sought than many people may realise. Women of different ages can require emergency contraception for a variety of reasons and being prepared by having a Morning After Pill handy is now a regular part of family planning.

Dr Andrews can issue EHC to women aged 18 to 55 to have in reserve should it be required.

Used after unprotected sex or after another method of contracep-

tion has failed, Emergency Hormonal Contraception can be used to prevent pregnancy. Examples of failed contraception include a split condom, missing a dose of your regular pill or because other medication such as antibiotics have interfered with your regular contraception.

There are two medications licensed in The UK as Emergency Hormonal Contraception: Levonorgestrel 1.5mg (or the brand Levonelle) and Ullipristal Acetate 30mg which is branded as ellaOne.

LEVONORGESTREL / LEVONELLE

This is the original Morning After Pill and may be used up to 72 hours after sex. It has been shown to be over 97% effective when taken within this time frame – but it is always best to take the treatment as soon as possible (ideally within the first 12 hours after sex).

Levonorgestrel has not been shown to cause any long term problems but it can cause some side effects which may include abdominal pain, headache, nausea and breast tenderness. It may

also make your next period slightly earlier or later than expected.

If you use a regular oral contraceptive, patch or ring, then Levonorgestrel can reduce its effectiveness in the short term. Should you require to use this treatment you should take your next pill, apply a new patch or insert a new ring within 12 hours of taking Levonorgestrel. Further, you should use additional contraceptive precautions such as condoms for the following:

For the patch, combined pill, implant or injection	The next 7 days
For the combined pill Qlaira	The next 9 days
For the mini pill	The next 2 days

More information can be found in the Patient Information Leaflet which is provided with every treatment dispensed by Dr Andrews or by clicking the link:

<http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/PIL.28325.latest.pdf>

ELLAONE

ellaOne contains the drug Ullipristal Acetate 30mg and can be taken up to 120 hours after sex. This treatment has been shown to be over 98% effective when taken within the 120 hour window, but as with Levonorgestrel is most effective when used within the first 12 hours after sex.

ellaOne has not be shown to cause any long terms problems but as with any medicine it may cause side effects. These can include abdominal pain, headache, nausea, breast tenderness or general muscle pain.

Emergency Hormonal Contraception

If you use a regular oral contraceptive, patch or ring, ellaOne can reduce its effectiveness in the short term. Should you require to use this treatment you should wait for 5 days before taking your

next pill, applying a new patch or inserting a new ring. Further, you should use additional contraceptive precautions such as condoms for the following:

For the patch, combined pill, implant or injection	The next 7 days
For the combined pill Qlaira	The next 9 days
For the mini pill	The next 2 days

More information can be found in the ellaOne Patient Information Leaflet included with a Dr Andrews purchase or by clicking the link below:

<http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/PIL.22275.latest.pdf>

Other Information

- Only one dose of Emergency Hormonal Contraception in either form can be used per cycle. To be clear that is one dose of Levonorgestrel or ellaOne: they should not be used in combination. If during your cycle you have need to access another dose of The Morning After Pill you should contact your GP or local family planning services.
- A common side effect of both treatments is nausea but if this advances to actual vomiting then the dose may not be absorbed properly. It is important to make a note of the time you have taken the tablet and if you vomit with 2 hours of taking Levonorgestrel or 3 hours of ellaOne you should seek medical advice as the contraceptive effect will not work. You may require another dose or a coil to be fitted.
- Emergency Hormonal Contraception does not cause abortion.
- Using Emergency Hormonal Contraception after unprotected sex does not replace any necessary precautions against sexually transmitted infections or diseases.
- If your next period is more than 5 days late after using either treatment then it is recommended that you use a pregnancy test.
- If you experience any sudden or unusual pain in your lower abdomen this could be a sign of Ectopic Pregnancy. This is when a fertilised egg implants outside the womb and is a rare but serious condition that requires immediate medical attention.

Further information can be found in the Patient Information Leaflet which is provided with every treatment that Dr Andrews supplies.

If you have any questions please contact Dr Andrews
patientcare@drandrews.co.uk