



Emergency Contraception vs. Medication Abortion

What is it?

- Emergency contraception (EC) is a safe medical intervention after having unprotected sex, or a contraceptive method fails, to prevent an unwanted pregnancy.
- There are three different forms of EC: over the counter medication, prescription medication, and certain IUDs.
- Over the counter (Plan B) and prescription (Ella) ECs prevent the body from ovulating. Taking it literally prevents you from being able to get pregnant. IUDs prevent fertilization and implantation. **This is NOT an abortion. Restrictions on abortion do not impact access to EC.**

Where can I get it?

- Plan B: at any pharmacy. You may be able to get it off the shelf, you may have to ask the pharmacist for it.
- Ella: via prescription from your provider.
- IUD: via a consult and insertion from your provider.

When can I use it?

- All EC methods are effective up to **120 hours**, or about 5 days, after having unprotected sex.

Who can use it?

- All EC methods are safe and effective to use for people capable of getting pregnant, no matter your age.
- Plan B is most effective for people under 165 pounds, Ella is most effective for people under 195 pounds, and IUDs are effective for people of all sizes. *No matter your body size, there is an effective EC method for you.*

What is it?

- Medication abortion uses two medications to end a pregnancy: mifepristone and misoprostol.
- Mifepristone stops hormones from going to the pregnancy. Misoprostol causes cramping and bleeding to pass the pregnancy.
- Mifepristone is taken first by mouth. 1-2 days later, misoprostol is either taken buccally (by dissolving in the space between the cheeks and the gums) or vaginally.
- Because these medications end an existing pregnancy, **this is an abortion.**

Where can I get it?

- Via telehealth or in clinic visit with your health care provider who offers abortion care. Access will vary dependent on where you live.

When can I use it?

- In medical settings, medication abortion is used up to 11 weeks of pregnancy.

Who can use it?

- With access, resources, and support, **medication abortion is safe and effective for anyone who needs it. People who self-manage their abortions with pills can do so safely. The real threat is criminalization.**
- No matter your age, no matter your weight, this is a safe and effective method of abortion up to 11 weeks.