Emergency contraception pills are readily available, without prescription, from most chemists. They are used up to 5 days later. The sooner they are taken within 24 hours after unprotected sex, but can be used up to 5 days after unprotected sex. The morning-after pill, are most effective if started soon after unprotected sex.

Emergency contraception pills do not rely on the use of hormones or devices and include the following:

- Fertility Awareness Based Methods (FABMs) use awareness of the fertile phase in the menstrual cycle to indicate when sexual intercourse should be avoided to prevent pregnancy.
- Further information and local contacts can be found at www.nfpprog.com or www.acnfp.com.au.

Breastfeeding – Lactational Amenorrhoea (LAM) is a very effective emergency contraceptive option. The IUD can be inserted up to 5 days after unprotected sex as a very effective emergency contraceptive option. The IUD is not suitable for all women.

IUDs are available from FPQ clinics, some doctors, gynaecologists and fertility clinics.

Methods of EC available in Australia are:

- Emergency contraceptive pills
- Intrauterine Contraceptive Device (IUD)
- Condoms
- Sterilisation
- Withdrawal
- The diaphragm
- The cervical cap
- The sponge
- The breast
- The rhythm
- The vaginal ring
- The vaginal tablet
- The vaginal gel
- The LARC

A copper intrauterine contraceptive device (IUD) can be inserted up to 5 days after unprotected sex as a very effective emergency contraceptive option. The IUD is not suitable for all women.

EC is available to women who are at risk of unintended pregnancy after sexual intercourse.

Emergency contraception pills, commonly called the morning-after pill, are most effective if started within 24 hours after unprotected sex, but can be used up to 5 days later. The sooner they are taken after unprotected sex the better.

Emergency contraception pills are readily available, without prescription, from most chemists. They are also available from FPQ clinics and other sexual health services.

Methods of EC available in Australia are:

- Emergency contraceptive pills
- Intrauterine Contraceptive Device (IUD)
- Condoms
- Sterilisation
- Withdrawal
- The diaphragm
- The cervical cap
- The sponge
- The breast
- The rhythm
- The vaginal ring
- The vaginal tablet
- The vaginal gel
- The LARC

Federal Government of Australia

Visit www.fpq.com.au or contact one of the following locations:

- Brisbane 3250 0240
- Bundaberg 4151 1556
- Cairns 4051 3788
- Gold Coast 5531 2636
- Ipswich 3281 4088
- Rockhampton 4927 3999
- Sunshine Coast 5479 0755
- Toowoomba 4632 8166
- Townsville 4723 6597

Where to get help and advice about contraception

- Family planning clinics
- Sexual health clinics
- Women’s health centres
- Youth health centres
- Your local doctor
- www.fpq.com.au

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Considerations when choosing contraception should ensure that you have enough information to choose the one that suits you best. You can also refer to FPQ’s contraception factsheets at www.fpq.com.au for more details on individual contraceptive methods.

The contraceptive implant – Implanon®
Implanon® XT is a small flexible rod, which is inserted in the inner arm above the elbow, where it slowly releases a low dose of a progestogen (similar to the hormone progesterone), which is naturally produced by the female body. The implant is designed to prevent pregnancy for up to 3 years. Device removal is relatively easy or can be removed earlier if required.

The progestogen releasing intrauterine system – Mirena®
Mirena® is a small T-shaped device made of plastic that is placed inside the uterus ( womb ), where it slowly releases a very low dose of progestogen to prevent pregnancy for up to 5 years. Periods usually become lighter or may stop when using a hormonal IUD.

The Copper intrauterine contraceptive device (Cu-IUD)
The Cu-IUD is a small device made from plastic and copper that is fitted inside the uterus. There are 2 types of copper IUDs available in Australia – the Multiload Cu 375™ and the TT 380™. It can be used as contraception for 5 or 10 years respectively and can be easily removed at any time. They have no hormones and therefore no effect on the normal female cycle but periods may become heavier.

The progestogen-only contraceptive pill (POP)
The POP, sometimes referred to as ‘The Mini-Pill’, is an oral contraceptive containing a low dose of combined hormones. The POP is a highly effective contraceptive, which is naturally produced by the female body.

Condoms – male and female
The male condom is a sheath made of thin, strong, latex rubber or polyurethane, which is rolled onto the erect penis before vaginal, anal or oral sex.

The POP works by:
- thickening the mucous of the cervix so that sperm cannot enter the uterus

The female condom is a polyurethane sheath, which is inserted into the vagina prior to sexual intercourse. It is about 15 cm long and has two flexible rings to keep it in place in the vagina. The female condom is 79-95% effective.

Condoms work by:
- acting as a physical barrier that stops body fluids (eg sperm or vaginal fluid) passing between sexual partners. They can only be used once.

Combined oral contraceptive pill (The Pill)
The Combined Oral Contraceptive Pill (COC), commonly referred to as ‘The Pill’, is an oral contraceptive taken daily. It contains the hormones oestrogen and progestogen. These are similar to the hormones produced naturally by the female body. The Pill may help with acne and from fertilising ova (eggs).

The Pill mainly works by:
- preventing ovulation (egg release from the ovary)
- preventing sperm from moving through the uterus to fertilise an egg
- thickening the mucous of the cervix so that sperm cannot enter the uterus

Both the POP and COC can be used as contraception for 5 or 10 years. Periods may become heavier.

The POP relies on regular and consistent daily use to be effective. It is available on prescription from FPQ clinics or your doctor.

The contraceptive vaginal ring – NuvaRing®
NuvaRing® is a soft, plastic ring which releases low daily doses of two hormones, oestrogen and a progestogen, into the bloodstream. These hormones are similar to those naturally produced by the female body and the same as those used in the combined oral contraceptive (The Pill).

NuvaRing® mainly works by:
- preventing ovulation (egg release from the ovary)
- preventing sperm from moving through the uterus to fertilise an egg
- thickening the mucous of the cervix so that sperm cannot enter the uterus

The POP is 85-98% effective for pregnancy prevention and consistent and daily use is required for the sake of method. Contraception can be used in conjunction with other methods to increase contraceptive effectiveness.

The female condom is a polyurethane sheath, which is inserted into the vagina. It is 79-95% effective.

Condoms work by:
- acting as a physical barrier that stops body fluids (eg sperm or vaginal fluid) passing between sexual partners. They can only be used once.