



శ్రీ వేపచేదు విద్యా పీఠము

**VEPACHEDU EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION**

మన సంస్కృతి

Mana Sanskriti (Our Culture)

Chief Editor: Dr. Sreenivasarao Vepachedu, Esq.

## Emergency Contraception - Morning After Pill

In 1960, the FDA approved the oral contraceptive that would come to be known as "the pill." Within a few years, millions of women were using it. At a time when the population was surging, many believed that the drug would help eradicate poverty around the globe, ensure happy and stable marriages, and liberate women. The contraceptive pill has been called the greatest scientific invention of the 20th Century by some commentators, arriving at a moment of social and political upheaval across the world.

By 1960, the baby boom was taking its toll. Mothers who had four children by the time they were 25 still faced another 15 to 20 fertile years ahead of them. Growing families were hemmed into small houses, cramped by rising costs. By the end of the fifties, the United States birthrate was overtaking India's. Most women were expected to stay at home and raise an expanding family while men went out to work.

As the 1960s progressed, the women's liberation movement gained momentum alongside the civil rights and anti-war movements. Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in the US, which prohibited employment and educational discrimination, helped make it possible for women to go into professional fields, the Pill also played a significant role. With almost 100% fertility control, women were able to postpone having children or space births to pursue a career or a degree that had never been possible prior to the Pill. After a decade on the market, the wonder drug that had been lauded by women as "liberating" and "revolutionary" came under attack by feminists. As women stood up, spoke out and refused to be passive participants in their health care, they achieved lasting changes in the American health care system. Yet questions surrounding the Pill remain unresolved as feminists and women's health care advocates debate who should control the woman's body and pregnancy prevention.

In the United States, according to a study published in 2011 (*Contraception*. 2011;84(5):478-485), in 2006, 49% of pregnancies were unintended. Unintended pregnancy is associated with an increased risk of problems for the mom and baby. If a

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pregnancy is not planned before conception, a woman may not be in optimal health for childbearing. For example, women with an unintended pregnancy could delay prenatal care that may affect the health of the baby. Therefore, it is important for all women of reproductive age to adopt healthy behaviors.

In June 2013, in a stark legal reversal of Obama administration ended years of court battles and scrapped age restrictions on the sale of emergency contraception pills called Emergency Contraception (EC) making the morning-after pill available to women and girls without a prescription and restriction. The pills are safe for all fertile women of all ages. With these pills being available on pharmaceutical store shelves like aspirins, any pregnant girl can get them without any unnecessary hassle and scrutiny. However, parents and pregnant children may still get a prescription from the family doctor so that the health insurance covers the needed protection from teenage pregnancy, which invariably would endanger the lives of both the pregnant child and infant. Teenage mothers are at an increased risk of delivering their babies prematurely, in comparison to those of new moms between the ages of 20 and 34 years old, according to a study published in International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, online June 12, 2013. However, anti-abortion groups restated their long-held view that giving young girls access to the contraceptive without requiring the notification of a doctor or parent could lead to reckless behavior, because teenage girls no longer need to use protection to prevent pregnancy.

Plan B is classified by the FDA as an emergency contraceptive and greatly reduces the chance of pregnancy if taken within 72 hours after intercourse. It differs from abortion drugs such as RU486, which is intended to terminate a pregnancy that already has been established. Once FDA receives that supplemental application from Teva Pharmaceuticals, the FDA intends to approve it promptly, and soon the pill will be available on pharmacy shelves.

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In the US, morning-after-pills are available to 17 years or older people, without prescription. Emergency Contraception (EC) will soon be available on the shelf without restrictions (most likely in July or August 2013), but this change has not taken effect yet. You still need to be 17 or older to purchase EC, and it is available only from the pharmacist.

There are five brands of EC available in the US. Plan B One-Step and Next Choice One Dose are one pill that you take as soon as possible after sex. Next Choice and Levonorgestrel Tablets are two pills that you can take together as soon as possible after sex. Ella is one pill that you take within 5 days of sex. Ella is more effective than the other plans (Plan B One-Step, Next Choice, etc.) on the 4th or 5th day after sex. Timing is critical. Figure out where you can get EC as soon as possible after unprotected sex – within 24 hours and up to 3 days is ideal.

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"Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed." -  
Mahatma Gandhi

Hinduism is a way of life, with diversity of religion, and Indian teachings share the importance of *seva* (service).

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Om! Asatoma Sadgamaya, Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya, Mrityorma Amritamgamaya,  
Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih!

(Aum! Lead the world from wrong path to the right path, from ignorance to  
knowledge, from mortality to immortality, and peace!)

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