

Morning After Pill (MAP)/Emergency Contraception(EC) Dialogue

If the caller's initial question is, "Where can I get the morning-after pill?"

Respond by saying:

"First, do you know anything about the morning-after pill?" OR

"Why do you think you need it?"

Also, use whatever steps are appropriate with a caller. You do not necessarily need to go in order. For example, you might begin with Step 1 and find out that a caller is concerned about the health effects of the Morning-After Pill. In that instance, it would be appropriate to move to Step 6 of the MAP dialogue.

Caller: Do you have the morning-after pill/emergency contraception?

Step 1: Slow the conversation down. Find out about her situation Ask questions and use active listening skills.

"Sounds like you're concerned you might be pregnant. Are you calling for yourself?"

Step 2: Explain the importance of a pregnancy test.

"Well, I'm glad that you called us. The morning-after pill is not a service we provide; however, it is recommended that you take a pregnancy test first to determine if you are pregnant from a previous cycle. If you already have an established pregnancy, taking the morning-after pill will be pointless and will only subject you to the possible side effects of nausea and vomiting. Our free pregnancy test will let you know if you might have conceived more than 7-10 days ago. Would you like one today?"

If no...go to Step 3 of this dialogue

If she already took a pregnancy test and it was positive:

“If you test positive do no take the pills. Women who have a known or suspected pregnancy should not take the pills according to the manufacturer of PlanB (which is one brand of the morning after pill). It is also important that you receive accurate results from any test. We offer a free, laboratory-quality urine test in a controlled environment and have consultants available to talk through your concerns with you. Can I schedule you for a test appointment today?”

If no...go to Step 6 of this dialogue or go ahead and offer an ultrasound.

If she already took a pregnancy test and it was negative...

“Keep in mind, even if you get a negative test result, you may still be pregnant from a previous encounter (it takes several days after conception for a pregnancy to register positive on a pregnancy test). Right after intercourse it is too early for any test to determine if you are pregnant. You could get a false negative and actually be pregnant. We have consultants available to talk through your concerns with you and can schedule you for a free and confidential lab-quality pregnancy test. Can I schedule you for an appointment?”

If no...go to Step 3

Step 3: Explain the importance of taking the time to get informed.

“I understand how you might feel a sense or urgency and the need to make a quick decision. As with any other medical treatment, you need to take some time to get informed, and you do have a least 72 hours from the time of intercourse. You need to understand who this drug works and if you are comfortable with the possible result and side effects. Are you aware of how the morning-after pill works?”

(not exactly)

Step 4: Explain how the morning-after pill works.

“The morning-after pill is a megadose of chemical hormones that contain estrogen and progesterone hormones or just progesterone. If you take the drug within 72 hours of unprotected sex, there are three ways that it can work:

1. It can prevent or delay ovulation, restricting the release of an egg from the ovary.
2. It can prevent the fertilization of an egg that has already been released (however sperm can fertilize an egg as early as 15 minutes after intercourse.)²
3. It can shrink and dry out the lining of the uterus. This makes it hostile for a human embryo to implant. The human embryo then passes out of the uterus, resulting in an early abortion.”

Step 5: Explain that the morning-after pill can cause an abortion.

“Did you know that the morning-after pill could cause an abortion?”

(No...)

“Many women don’t realize that the morning-after pill could cause an abortion. When they find out, they wish someone had told them. What are your feelings about abortion?”

Step 6: Explain the serious possible side effects.

“Are you aware of the possible physical and emotional risks associated with the morning-after pill?”

(No...)

“The morning-after pill contains a high dosage of hormones taken in a short period of time. This can be very hard on your body.

In addition, the two primary side effects of the morning-after pill, nausea and abdominal pain, are similar to that of an ectopic pregnancy. If you take the morning-after pill and you have an ectopic pregnancy, you may falsely attribute the side effects to the pill. The results could then be fatal.

You also need to know that there are side effects that risks involved depending upon which form of “emergency contraception” you take.* Lesser risks include nausea, abdominal pain, fatigue, headache, heavier menstrual bleeding or lighter menses. More serious risks include the risk of developing blood clots, a possible increase in the tendency to develop strokes and heart attacks, and the risk of developing both benign and malignant liver tumors. Smoking greatly increases the risk of stroke and heart attacks.

We are concerned about the health effects on women and believe that you have the right to know that:

No long-term testing has been done to confirm the safety or the long-term effects of taking large doses of birth-control pills.

No studies have been conducted on the long-term effects of taking the morning-after pill repeatedly.

Adolescents are particularly at risk because no adequate studies have been done to determine the effects on teens whose bodies are still developing and undergoing rapid hormonal changes.

Possible physical side-effects of the morning-after pill include nausea, vomiting, breast tenderness, ectopic pregnancy and blood clot formation. Possible emotional side effects include guilt, anxiety depression, sleep disorder, and relationship disturbances.

Some doctors will not provide the morning-after pill to women who smoke, have current migraine headaches, or have a history of stroke or blood clots in the lungs or legs.

As you can see, there are many serious consequences to consider before taking the morning-after pill. Our center has more information available for you. Would you like to come by and pick up some materials?”

If caller is a victim of rape or incest

Caller: I need the morning-after pill because I was raped.

Again, slow the caller down. Use active listening. Gently encourage the client to go to the nearest Emergency Rooms so that they can properly collect any evidence and provide treatment to the caller. If she is unwilling to go to the ER, encourage her to call the police.

Using compassionate counseling skills, advise the caller that she will likely be offered the morning-after pill if she goes to the nearest Emergency Room. Inform her that you have information regarding this type of drug that she should know about before taking it. Let her know that the drug is promoted as being effective for 72 hours after unprotected sex and share with her some of the information in this dialogue.