

*8th Postgraduate Course for
Training in Reproductive
Medecine and Reproductive
Biology.*

Emergency contraception
in
adolescents.

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Emergency contraception

- *Definition*
- *Characteristics*
- *History*
- *Reasons for requesting EC*
- *Methods of EC*
- *Failure rate*

In December 1995 EC pills (Yuzpe regimen) were added to the WHO list of essential drugs.

Why EC is important in adolescents?

- Sexarche is happening earlier nowadays
- Fertility rates in women aged 15-19 years
- Over one billion people are between the ages of 10 and 19years
- The idea of adolescent sexuality?
- The characteristics of adolescent sexuality
- What about STDs, including HIV/AIDS?

There is no evidence that knowledge of EC methods has the effect of encouraging sexual activity among young people

Results of Research

- Knowledge of EC by adolescents
- Use of EC by adolescents
- Sources of information
- Health professionals

Knowledge about EC of teenagers aged 14-15 years in one survey (Scotland)

No of questionnaires completed.	1 2 0 6
No of boys	6 1 2
No of girls	5 9 4
No (%) teens that had heard of EC	1 1 2 1 (9 3 %)
No (%) of sexually active girls	1 9 4 (3 2 . 7 %)
No (%) of sexually active boys.	1 6 8 (2 7 %)
No (%) knowing correct time limit.	3 1 8 (2 6 . 4 %)

Knowledge about EC in pregnant teenagers in one survey in England.

No of pregnant teenagers interviewed	167
No of planned pregnancies	20 (12%)
No of unplanned pregnancies	122 (73%)
Nr of pregnant teenagers equivocal at the time of conception.	25 (15%)
Nr(%) had heard of E.C.	135 (81%)
Why they had not heard (100%)	
a) not heard about it	12 (38%)
b) not advertised sufficiently	8 (25%)
c) lack of sex education at school	2 (6%)
d) did not know	10 (31%)
Did not obtain it	119 (88%)
Obtained it-	16
-failed	11
-took the pills incorrectly	1
-did not take the pills	4

Knowledge about EC in teenagers aged
12-18 years in one nationally
representative telephone survey (USA)

- No of teenagers interviewed-----1510.
- No of teenagers that were aware that something could be done after unprotected sex to prevent pregnancy-----23%.
- No of teenagers that had heard of morning- after pills as EC pills-----28%
- No of teenagers that had heard of EC pills ---10%

Knowledge of teenagers about different EC methods by age (USA)

- No (%) of teenagers that has heard of EC pills

Age.

12-14 years-----15%

15-16 " -----44%

17-18 " -----51%

Knowledge of teenagers about different EC methods by ethnicity (USA)

- No (%) of teenagers that has heard about EC

Ethnicity:

African-American-----	18%
Latina-----	25%
White-----	37%

Teenage girls' likelihood of using EC pills.

	Frequency (%) Very or somewhat likely to use EC pills	Frequency (%) Not at all	frequency (%) Does not know or refused	No
Age				
12-14	69	23	8	322
14-16	70	30	*	242
17-18	62	38	*	193
Ethnicity.				
African- American	76	23	1	171
Latina	66	32	2	158
White	67	30	3	379

No of girls aged 15-19 years who had consulted for EC (England)

- Total registered-----373.
- N who consulted GP (%)-----59 (16%).

The likelihood of using EC is tempered by:

- **Information**
- **The perceived barriers to services**
 - the need to get a prescription from a physician.
 - the short time frame in which they think pills are effective.

Sources of information

- Health professionals
- School staff or classes
- Parents
- Friends
- TV, radio, magazines
- Leaflet or poster

Health professionals

- They are familiar with EC pills
- They tend to inform patients only in response to emergency situations
- Obstetricians/gynaecologists are more likely to prescribe EC
- They need better knowledge regarding the safety and behavioral effects of EC pills
- They promote sexual health among adolescents

Assessment of information

- Need for further information
- EC methods are a valuable tool to reduce unplanned pregnancies
- Pregnancy-prevention counseling needs to become part of routine care
- All the communities have to accept the reality of adolescent sexuality and sexeducation
- Clinics: health-adviser counsel all adolescent attenders

Many adolescents need access to health care

- *with facilities for:*

Contraception

Counselling

Screening for STD

Clinics should become more adolescent friendly with dedicated staff and set clinic time for teenagers.

CONCLUSIONS

- Adolescents information
- Widespread awareness about EC methods is accompanied by higher levels of use
- Easy access to contraceptive services
- The importance of regular health screening
- The need for new and better methods of EC
- Widespread programs for adolescents