

Since August 24, 2006 Plan B, a contraceptive drug, is an over-the-counter (OTC) option for women aged 18 and older. Plan B is often referred to as emergency contraception or the “morning after pill.” It contains an ingredient used in prescription birth control pills-only in the case of Plan B, each pill contains a higher dose and the product has a different dosing regimen. Like other birth control pills, Plan B has been available to women as a prescription drug. When used as directed, Plan B effectively and safely prevents pregnancy. Plan B will remain available as a prescription-only product for women age 17 and under.

The Davison Health Center continues to honor its commitment to provide comprehensive health care to our women students. We will continue to provide Plan B to aid in the prevention of pregnancy. However, we will do so in the following new ways:

1. Any female student who feels she is a candidate for Plan B can present herself to the Health Center. After completing the standard walk-in form, the student’s chart will be pulled and the nurse on duty will dispense Plan B. The charge for one package is \$18.00 and can be billed to the student’s account.

An example might be the student who has had an unexpected act of intercourse or has had a failure with a barrier method such as a condom breaking, or used incorrectly, or incorrect diaphragm use.

Another example might be the student who is planning to travel abroad and wants to carry this as a backup method. This could be considered prevention of pregnancy in the same manner a typhoid immunization can help prevent the disease.

Purchase in this way is also available to students desiring the added security of emergency contraception, especially if non-hormone methods are the only birth control being used.

2. If a student is unsure whether she is indeed a candidate for Plan B, or is 17 years of age or younger she can call and make an appointment to discuss her situation. An appointment will be made for her with the appropriate clinician. An example might be the student who is concerned she might already be pregnant, has had multiple episodes of unprotected intercourse, or is in general uncertain about her decision to take Plan B. In cases of sexual assault it is ALWAYS better to meet with an experienced clinician.

3. During hours the Health Center is closed, student may purchase Plan B at a local pharmacy.

Keep in mind certain important points:

1. Plan B is safe in almost all circumstances; however it must be given in a timely fashion. To be MOST effective Plan B should be given within 72 hours of a single episode of unprotected intercourse. Research has demonstrated that it can be given up to 5 days from an episode of unprotected intercourse, but is more effective the earlier it is taken.

2. Plan B should be stored in a cool environment without extreme temperature variation.

3. If you develop sudden severe headache, chest pain, or abdominal pain, go the Emergency Room immediately. These serious side effects are very rare.
4. Plan B will not be effective if you are already pregnant. It is important to follow the package insert. Any questions can be directed to the Health Center and will be answered by the appropriate clinician.
5. Plan B should not be viewed as your primary birth control method. The Health Center is always available by appointment to help you make a decision regarding your contraceptive needs. After hours concern can be answered by the physician on call, but can usually wait until we open at 9:00 a.m. Bottom line – if you are worried, confused, anxious – CALL.

Lastly, Plan B does not protect against sexually transmitted infections. Any episode of unprotected intercourse should be followed by an appointment to discuss testing for Chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, HPV and HIV.