

Prevent unplanned pregnancies: help patients plan ahead and be prepared.

As a health care provider, you can encourage planned pregnancies by:

- Educating about birth control and emergency contraception.
- Preparing sexually active patients (female and male) to handle a birth control emergency.
- Offering advance prescriptions for emergency contraception pills to interested female patients under 18.

The American Academy of Pediatrics encourages physicians and other health care professionals to:

- Educate and counsel all teens and young adults about emergency contraception during their annual visit.
- Explain that emergency contraception is very different from “the abortion pill” and does not end an established pregnancy.
- Consider advance prescriptions for teens and young adults.

(AAP Policy Statement: Emergency Contraception, October 2005)

Advance prescriptions increase the likelihood that women and teens will use the medication when needed but DO NOT increase sexual or contraceptive risk-taking behavior.

Educational messages for use with adolescents:

- Emergency contraception (EC) pills are best used as a **back up** to another form of birth control.
- EC may prevent pregnancy for **up to 5 days** after unprotected sex, but work best in the first 24 hours.
- EC does **NOT** protect from sexually transmitted infections or AIDS.



Forsyth County
Infant Mortality Reduction Coalition
www.HelpOurBabies.org

www.HealthyCommunity.ws

