

# Getting emergency contraception from a pharmacy



the women's  
the royal women's hospital

No matter how old you are, you can go to a pharmacy and ask for emergency contraception.

The pharmacist will usually ask you a number of questions. This is to make sure it is a good idea for you to take emergency contraception.

Pharmacists do this for all kinds of medicines, not just emergency contraception.

If the pharmacist decides not to sell you emergency contraception for reasons other than your safety, they must send you to someone who will.

## Questions a pharmacist will normally ask you

The pharmacist will usually ask you questions about:

- your usual means of contraception
- why you need emergency contraception
- the number of hours since you last had unprotected sex
- information about your period
- whether you have had a pregnancy test recently
- medical conditions such as unexplained vaginal bleeding
- other medicines you are taking. Including prescribed, over-the-counter, from a supermarket or health food shop
- health symptoms such as burning or pain when passing urine, lower abdominal pain, pain during or after sex, unusual vaginal discharge, irregular vaginal bleeding, or spotting.

This information helps the pharmacist to decide if emergency contraception is safe and suitable for you.

## Questions that a pharmacist is not allowed to ask you

A pharmacist should not ask you the following:

- Who are you having sex with?
- Do your parents know you're having sex?
- Do you know that this is an abortion?
- What is your religion?

These questions have nothing to do with whether emergency contraception is safe for you.

## Your privacy

When you give information to a health professional, they are legally required to protect your privacy.

This is an important part of being able to trust your health professional to look after you.

Information you give them can only be used, stored, and shared in accordance with the law. For example, a pharmacist can't give information about you to your mum, cousin or any other relative, your friends, schoolteacher, or neighbour.

There are serious penalties for health professionals who break this law. In Victoria, you can contact the Health Services Commissioner if you have concerns about a health professional's use of your health information.

## Where to get more information

- Your local doctor (GP)
- Your local pharmacist
- 1800 My Options - 1800 696 784
- Women's Medicines Information Service (03) 8345 3190

**Disclaimer:** This fact sheet provides general information only. For specific advice about your or your baby's healthcare needs, you should seek advice from your health professional. The Royal Women's Hospital does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage arising from your reliance on this fact sheet instead of seeing a health professional. If you or your baby require urgent medical attention, please contact your nearest emergency department.  
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