

Face Off:

Should the morning after pill be sold without a prescription?

Risky pill calls for consideration, advice from physician

Easy access needed to control population, decrease abortion rate

Cassandra Mathieson
The Clackamas Print



There are many responsible choices for women to make when it comes to choosing their preferred type of birth control.

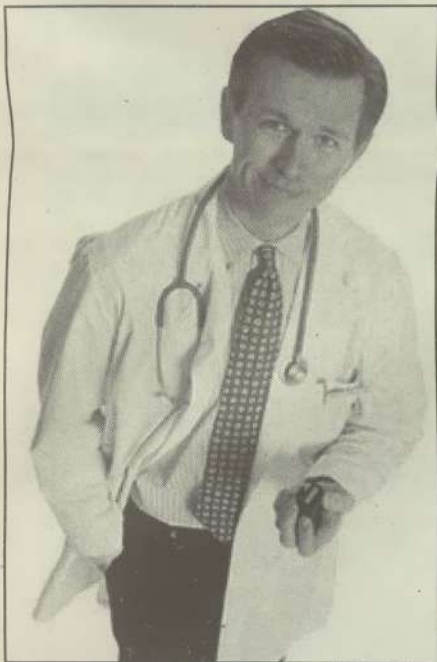
"Emergency contraception" will all too easily become "everyday contraception" if it becomes an over-the-counter drug. The so-called, "morning after" pill was originally meant as a type of last resort in case the chosen method of birth control happened to fail, *not* as an alternative form thereof, which is *exactly* what it would become if it were to be sold over the counter and readily available without a prescription.

The "Plan B" pill has very specific time constraints and directions for use that make it all the more important that it be prescribed by a physician along with counseling on exactly how it should be taken. In a modern world where we overdose on cough medicine, it's far too risky to think that directions for use on the label of the package can suffice for professional instruction.

Not only are there specific directions that need to be strictly adhered to when taking the morning after pill, but women also need to know the effects it will have on their bodies.

According to www.4women.gov, emergency contraception functions by stopping ovulation, fertilization and implantation of the eggs released by the ovaries.

It has a wide spectrum of side effects, including extreme nausea, vomiting, and fever somewhat comparable to what one would experience with a bad case of the stomach flu.



Internet Photo

able to everyone, with a prescription and proper counseling by a health care professional. This drug is a powerful one, and although it is a good safety net for safe-sex mishaps, it needs to remain just that. After all, it is the "morning after" pill, not the "every morning after" pill.

It is a useful and needed drug, yes, but one that requires the direction of a health professional.

Were emergency contraception readily available without a prescription, it isn't hard to foresee a large increase in sexually transmitted diseases. When it's so incredibly convenient to make a trip to the supermarket directly after, there will undoubtedly be many couples who find it easier to use condoms and other proper birth control methods less, if at all.

In short, emergency contraception

needs to be available to everyone, with a prescription and proper counseling by a health care professional.



Jacob Ray
The Clackamas Print

Right now there is a heated debate whether to make the morning-after birth control pill, an emergency contraceptive known as "Plan B," an over-the-counter drug without a prescription for women age 16 and older.

I don't see why this is even a debate, it just makes sense that this should be over-the-counter. Let's say a teenage girl has sex with her boyfriend and the condom breaks, but it's the weekend so she can't get a prescription. Now there's a good chance she'll get pregnant. If "Plan B" were to be over-the-counter, she could've just went to the drug store and everything would have been fine. Now, there's just another teenage parent.

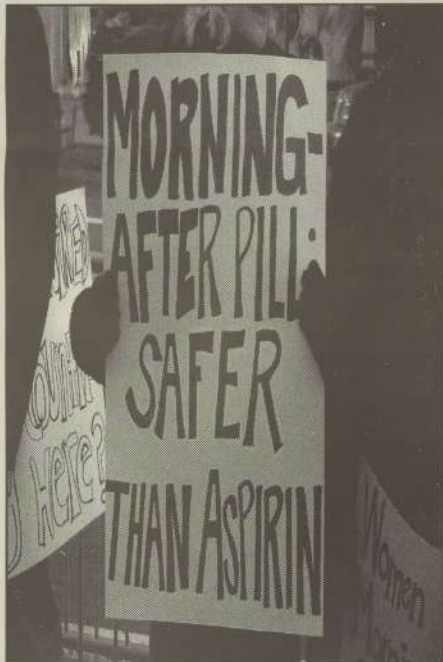
According to CNN.com, from Feb. 1, 2003, to Feb. 1, 2004, there were 2.1 million unintended births in the U.S.; also, the U.S. population is currently growing at one percent per year. I think it's time we did something for population control, and this might be one of the good things.

"Plan B" can prevent pregnancy for up to 68 percent within 72 hours after sex. The sooner the pill is taken, the more effective it is.

Opponents argue that this drug would encourage women, teenagers in particular, to have risky sex. This may be true, but it's a fact that teenagers are having sex. We need to accept it, and on top of educating them, we need to make the resources accessible.

For those that oppose the morning after pill, because they believe that it is a method of abortion, they should check their facts. It's well known that the morning after pill does not affect those women that are already pregnant. It prevents fertilization but it does not terminate the fetus after conception.

The question of when life begins, whether at conception or otherwise, is a matter of opinion, and to force one's opinion on a general population is wrong (that's right, Georgie). By taking away this method of birth control, are we not encouraging women to have abortions? No matter what, if a pregnancy is not intended and if a woman does not want to be pregnant, she will find a way to not be in that position.



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Student Poll

Do you think the morning after pill should be available over the counter?



"Yes. I think for emergency reasons it would be a good idea."

Cristin Dean



"No. Anything that could result in an unborn child, I am against."

Donna Southwick



"No. It's an easy out."

Drew Russell



"No. Because the weight of abortion should be more than just an out."

Emily Jones



"Yes. I don't see why it should be if there is no danger in it."

Michael Curry

This week's poll compiled by Amy Sandell and Brie Daykin.

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