

sextalk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

factoid

The Southern Arizona Aids Foundation (SAAF) provides peer counseling for people living with HIV/AIDS. For more information about SAAF, call 520-628-7223 or visit www.sAAF.org.

Q. How long after sex can you conceive?

A. Sperm are very, very determined to fertilize an egg. Once inside the reproductive tract, they can spend up to five days working at this goal.

Q. How does the morning after pill work? How effective is it?

A. Emergency Contraception, also known as *Plan B*®, consists of high doses of hormones that delay ovulation and inhibit implantation in the uterus. It should be taken within five (5) days of unprotected sex. The sooner it is taken, the more effective it is. Men (18 years and older) can also purchase *Plan B*®. See below for effectiveness rates.

Q. What type of birth control is most effective? Pill vs. condom vs. ring etc.

A. The effectiveness rate of birth control is dependent upon the method and consistency in which you use it. In other words, what type of birth control did you choose and how well do you adhere to the directions for use? Here are *some* popular forms of birth control and their effectiveness (Note: This is not a complete list):

- Withdrawal before ejaculation is 73-96% effective. Does *not* provide STD protection.
- The Pill is 92-99.7% effective depending on the type of pill and consistency of use (take everyday at the same time). Does *not* provide STD protection.
- Nuva Ring is 98-99% effective. Does *not* provide STD protection.
- Male Condoms are 85-98% effective and provide *very good* STD protection.
- Female Condoms are 75-95% effective and provide *good* STD protection.
- Emergency Contraception (EC) is taken within 120 hours (five days!) of unprotected intercourse (vaginal sex). It is 75-89% effective depending on how soon it is taken after sex. Does *not* provide STD protection. **EC should not be used as regular birth control.**
- Abstinence is 100% effective as long as there is no intercourse or genital contact. *Super* STD protection!

Have a question? Send it to sextalk@email.arizona.edu

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